AMERICAN ANNALS

OF THE

Deaf and Dumb,

EDITED BY

EDWARD A. FAY,

UNDER THE DIRECTION OF

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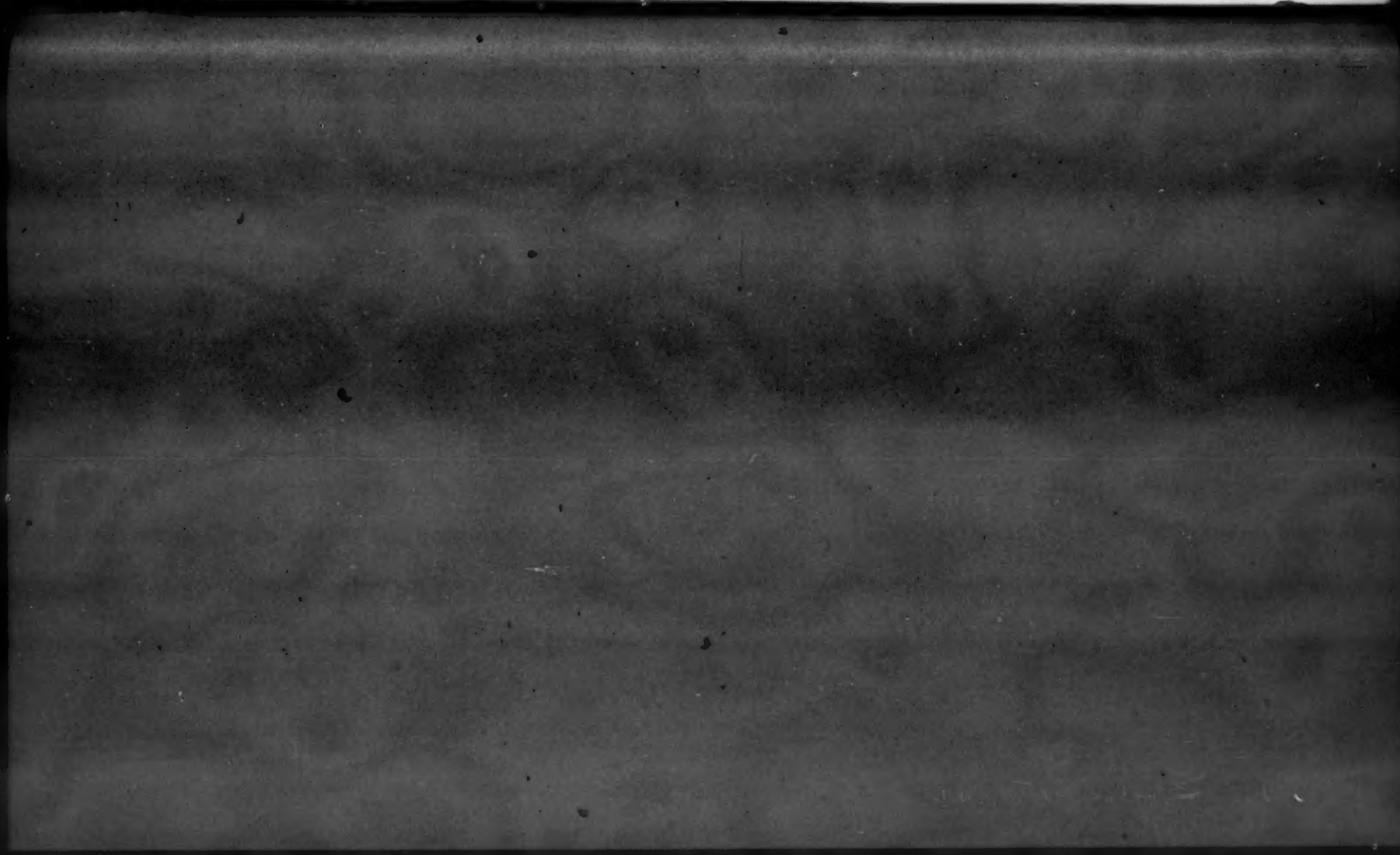
Executive Committee.

VOL. XVII., No. 2.

APRIL, 1872.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

PRINTED BY GIBSON BROTHERS.



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THE PSYCHICAL STATUS AND CRIMINAL RESPONSIBILITY OF THE TOTALLY UNEDUCATED DEAF AND DUMB.*

BY ISAAC LEWIS PEET, M. A., NEW YORK.

Nec ratione docere ulla suadereque surdis
Quid sit opus facto, facile est; neque enim paterentur
Nec ratione ulla sibi ferrent amplius auris
Vocis inauditos sonitus obtundere frustra.
LUCRETIUS, *De Rerum Natura*, Book V., 1052–5.

THE deaf-mute, as distinguished from one who is simply mute, is a person who, from the mere fact of want of hearing, does not possess the ability to express thought in articulate speech. Dwelling in a world of silence, sound awakens no responsive echo in his soul. Words which, thrilling nerves that excite the brain to action, call for an effort at least of imitation on the part of the child endowed with hearing, affect in him no sense that may be said to produce their counterpart. As the eye is wanting to the denizens of those subterranean localities into which light does not penetrate; as limbs are not furnished to beings whose locomotion is confined to a liquid *habitat;* and as the hand is denied to those orders of the animal creation to whose functions that marvellous instrument is not indispensable, so, where there has

* Read before the Medico-Legal Society of New York, November 9, 1871, and reprinted, by permission, from the *Journal of Psychological Medicine* for January, 1872.

been no hearing, there is no natural voluntary exercise of the corresponding faculty of speech. This does not imply, what is indeed in most cases contrary to the fact, that the physical organs of speech are defective, for if the deaf-mute could be invested with hearing, speech would soon follow, and many that have never heard have been so educated in the use of these organs as to be able to pronounce syllables and words in a manner recognizable by the ear. The mute who is not deaf, however, owes his infirmity to one of two causes: either there is malformation or weakness in some one of the parts on which vocal utterance depends, or there exists a want of vigor in one or more of the intellectual powers, even supposing such powers not to be entirely wanting.

Of those mute from the first-mentioned cause, *two* have been brought directly under my personal observation and instruction. One was a boy twelve years of age, who had been accustomed to hear, and hear perfectly, the conversation of those around him, and who could answer a great variety of questions which could be satisfied by an affirmative or negative movement of the head, and could obey directions given to him with the voice, but had never himself uttered a word. The malformation of his organs of speech was patent to the slightest inspection. He could not, when he entered the institution, read or write, but, after several years of patient instruction, was brought to a point where he could derive information from books, and express his thoughts and feelings with the pen. Without a natural defect of verbal memory, it was yet evident that this faculty had been greatly impaired by want of the ability to give expression to the words he knew; for it was a long time after he had learned to write single words from vocal dictation before he could retain a sentence of even moderate length so as to reproduce it. His other faculties were very much quickened by the use, on his own part, of signs, which he readily learned. Of course it was necessary to explain to him every form of expression he had not heard before. This was done partly by means of spoken words and partly by gestures, which he seemed to comprehend the more readily

from the fact that, in the society of deaf-mutes in which he was necessarily placed, he acquired a great facility in expressing himself in that way. In his case, the power seemed to be developed of comprehending more perfectly what was communicated by the method to which he himself naturally had recourse when communicating his ideas to others.

The other case was that of a young man eighteen years of age, also mute from birth. He entered the institution entirely illiterate, never having learned the alphabet in either its printed or written form. He had great self-respect, always attired himself neatly, and appeared to advantage in the silent intercourse he had with others. He had for some years worked in a woolen factory, and was able to support himself without assistance from his friends. In the single year he was under instruction he acquired an ability to read understandingly, as well as to give correctly in writing the incidents of every-day life, so that on returning to his manual labors he was in possession of a very satisfactory means of communication with others. Unlike the lad first mentioned, he must all the while have had a mental speech fully up to the necessities of the society in which he was accustomed to move. The language of signs was not used in his instruction, and he seemed to feel no inclination to avail himself of it. No impediment of speech was apparent to the eye—his inability being probably the result of some imperfection in the larynx.

The writer's own experience of nearly thirty years, however, enables him to add his testimony to that of other instructors of the deaf and dumb, to the effect that cases of hearing-mutes, with good intellectual capacities like those just mentioned, are so rare as to make the possession of hearing in connection with want of speech *prima-facie* evidence of mental imbecility. Instances of this last kind are unfortunately very numerous. Hardly a year passes that several such mutes are not presented for admission into institutions for the deaf and dumb by parents, whom hope had directed thither, to find that the calamity which had befallen their children was one far more deplorable than that of

mere inability to enunciate words, as it also is than of mere inability to hear them, notwithstanding all that this last-named condition involves. The active part which those connected with institutions for the deaf and dumb have taken in the initiation of idiot asylums, and the frequent occasion they have for correspondence with their managers, is thus accounted for. With beings such as these, patient effort to call into exercise a dormant will, and gradually to develop enfeebled faculties, has met with some degree of success, and, if I am correctly informed, some have been enabled to attain intelligent vocal utterance. But the greater proportion are incapable of appreciable benefit, so that our idiot asylums, so far as they prove themselves schools, must be regarded in the light of institutions wherein only those children can be benefited who are not so far demented as to be incapable of speech.

No such proposition can be entertained with regard to the deaf-mute. His defects are not primary, as appertaining to the mind; but secondary, as the resultants of the deprivation of one of the senses. The only class of ideas to the perception of which he may not arrive are those which are dependent, in themselves considered, upon the sense of hearing, though the vibrations which affect other nerves than the auditory may produce sensations so analogous that he may be considered, so to speak, as under the influence of the penumbra rather than that of the total eclipse, or perhaps more appropriately under the faint refraction called twilight instead of the full light of day. For instance, the *drum* will at once attract the attention of any deaf-mute, however profound his deafness, and the idea of musical *time* is appreciable by the majority of this class. Experiment has shown that the telegraph alphabet of Morse, beaten on the drum, on the principle of a single strong-beat for the short dash, and a quick double-beat for the long one, gives rise to vibrations affecting the deaf so distinctly, that a class of such persons, with their faces so turned that they could not catch sight of the instrument, have recognized words spelled by this means, and written them promptly and accu-

rately upon the black-board; and, in at least two instances, deaf-mute young ladies, without a particle of hearing, have been taught to render correctly, on the piano, strains of music represented to the eye by notes.

It will thus be seen that, like the Parian marble in which the mind of a Praxiteles sees the perfect statue, and from which, with cunning hand, he develops the realization of his ideal, or the rude mass of iron in which the master-artisan perceives, and from which he evokes the moving, almost breathing machine, the uneducated deaf-mute is a being of great possibilities, but still only possibilities.

His condition is a field on which Psychology gazes with interest as intense as that with which Newton viewed the starry firmament, and in which he seeks the solution of questions more difficult than those which the geologist asks the rocks.

Are there innate ideas? Is thought possible without words? Is the idea of God inseparable from the human mind? Is conscience an innate or an acquired faculty? Is moral responsibility a principle applicable to those who, possessing mental and moral powers, are yet so restrained in their exercise that they are but very imperfectly developed? Such are a few of the inquiries which spontaneously suggest themselves in connection with this subject, and which will necessarily be touched upon, if not fully discussed, as we attempt its development.

The term *uneducated*, as applied to a deaf-mute, is not to be understood as implying merely the absence of training in verbal language, but of all successful attempts on the part of those around him to make available to him the observation and experience of others, and to fix in his mind general principles of thought and action.

Considered in this light, what is he? Is he an intellectual being, and if so, in what sense? Though the current thought of the community in which he dwells finds no access to his mind, though the language which conveys to the hearing child of three or four years of age the germs of all subsequent knowledge is unheard and unheeded, he possesses a

certain degree of mental power which is entirely independent of such conditions.

This is not confined to that recognization of forms, and that association of recognized objects with qualities, and of actions with resulting sensations, in which many of the brute creation show such a degree of intellectual power as to make it difficult to fix the boundary between what we call instinct and reason; for, though many of the mental phenomena presented by deaf-mutes are merely a higher development of what is usually regarded in the light of animal instinct, as exemplified by the chicken that runs to covert when the wing of the hawk sweeps the sky, by the bee that flies in the face of the nearest stranger when the hive is disturbed, or by the dog that runs in the direction indicated by the finger of his master, still the higher possibilities of the heir of human reason soon manifest themselves.

Perhaps the first evident token of a reason higher than that of the highest of the mere animal creation is the ability to designate specifically the object of desire when that object is not in sight, and to complain specifically of wrong done when the author of that wrong is not present. Many of the inferior animals can manifest their desire for some object which they can designate when it is present, and some can exhibit indignation against those who have wronged themselves or their masters when they see the wrong-doer before them, but it is an exclusively human prerogative to be able to designate the *absent* intelligibly to others, and a yet higher prerogative to be able to designate the kind of wrong or the kind of benefit received at a time past. The dog who barks furiously at the man who struck him yesterday was never known to *indicate* purposely whether he was struck with a stick or a stone, whether in the head or the foot.

We may assume, then, that the starting-point of human intellect, as distinguished from animal instinct, is the use of *signs* to designate absent persons, objects, places, qualities, and actions. For the child who hears, these signs are very early supplied by the spoken words constantly ringing in his ears. For the deaf-mute, they must be visible signs.

When, therefore, a deaf-mute child has become able to designate whether he wants this thing or that, neither being in sight, or to tell what was taken from him and who took it, he has evidently ascended above the domain of mere animal instinct. The intelligent use of signs for ideas, furnished by gesture and expression, is as much a test of the possession of human reason as the intelligent use of the verbal signs which we call speech.

There are deaf-mutes whose sign-dialect is very rude and meagre, and there are deaf-mutes equally ignorant of verbal language who yet possess quite an extensive and well-developed system of signs. The difference is only in degree.

As, in the scanty dialect of a tribe of savages, we recognize the human power of speech, so, in a very moderate ability to use signs for recalling the absent and the past, we recognize those germs of human intellect which may develop into the multiform bloom of a cultivated language of gesture and expression.

That man is proved to be man only by the possession of a language is a received axiom. That this language or means of communication may be addressed to other senses than the ear, all intelligent men will admit. But the corollary that this language, the possession of which stamps its possessor as a rational being, may be simply a language of gesture, movement, and expression, without any hint of words spoken or written, is apprehended with difficulty by many men even of high intellectual cultivation. And yet this is equally demonstrable by facts and analogies.

It is very true that the processes of mental development, by speech and by a language of gestures, are not parallel—cannot, in fact, be made to run parallel. The great prerogative of the *one* is its power of generalizing and concentrating thought. The *other* owes to the pantomime which forms its basis, supplies its elements, and gives it much of its self-interpreting power, a certain pictorial character. Hence it is more graphic, and, for the class of material ideas, more precise. But, naturally dealing with the concrete and the actual, it grasps generalizations, abstractions, hypotheses, and per-

sonifications with difficulty, and attains to their full expression only after long and diligent cultivation, under the auspices of minds trained by the aid of verbal language. The great difference apparent in the mental and moral condition of uneducated deaf-mutes, who were probably originally of equal mental capacity, is due to the fact that the ignorance, stiffness, and prejudices of many of the connections and natural guardians of deaf-mute children have operated to induce them to repel, rather than encourage and aid, the instinctive efforts of the deaf-mute to make his wants and wishes known by signs. Hence it is that a deaf-mute child, placed in such discouraging circumstances, begins to talk by signs much later, and develops much less ability to communicate in that way than another deaf-mute child who is surrounded by intelligent and sympathizing friends, especially where there is already, in the family, some knowledge of the mode of communicating with the deaf by gestures and pantomime. Thus it is that, where there are two or more deaf-mutes in the same family or neighborhood, they usually possess a much more expanded dialect of signs than that which a solitary mute may be able to devise, and, as will be easily inferred, their social enjoyments are much greater, and their intelligence, being so much earlier and more constantly called into play, is much more fully developed.

In cases of extreme neglect, the deaf-mute may seem hardly superior to an idiot. But the capacity for development still remains, often to a somewhat late period of life, though, of course, faculties left so long in total inaction become more and more torpid with advancing years.

Cases of such extreme neglect are not now very common. The magnetic sympathy of mind with kindred mind penetrates the barriers interposed by closing the usual channels of sense, and it is seldom, indeed, that the deaf-mute is not blessed with at least one or two companions who, finding the ear-gate closed, will aid him to make more straight and easy the path to communion of souls through one or more unaccustomed portals.

A few years since, there died in Scotland a very old man bearing the name of James Mitchell, a name he himself had never learned to utter, or write, or spell. He had never heard the *voice*—never looked on the *face* of man or woman. Yet, though deaf and blind from birth, he gave evident proofs of the possession of human faculties, and by means of signs could make his wants known with considerable particularity to the one or two accustomed to communicate with him, and could receive and follow out directions addressed to the sense of touch to an extent which may seem incredible to those who have not investigated the ability of the human soul to supply senses that are wanting by the cultivation of those that remain. Had he been so fortunate as to meet a Howe or Hirzel in his plastic youth, he might have attained to a mental and moral cultivation perhaps not inferior to those which have rendered Laura Bridgman and James Edward Meystre the marvels of the world.

You will probably recollect that Blackstone, that oracle of the English common law, while admitting that ordinary deaf-mutes may manifest their wishes by signs, holds that one deaf, dumb, and blind from birth must necessarily be in the condition of an idiot. But those who have investigated such cases as that of James Mitchell are aware that the germs of a sign-language possessed by him are capable of being developed, as was done in the case of Julia Brace at Hartford, so as to furnish a medium for all necessary communications. Even with the deaf, dumb, and blind, where there are human faculties, the difficulties that prevent their development and cultivation may leave the individual low down in the scale of intelligence, but still far above the idiot or the mere animal.

It is painful to recall the judgments that in former times have been passed on the uneducated deaf-mute. There are few but have heard of that man of saintly and self-sacrificing benevolence, the Abbé de l'Epée, who devoted his life and fortune to the melioration of the lot of the deaf and dumb, and to whose zeal and labors it is in large measure due that education became possible to more than a favored few of

that afflicted class. This good man was accustomed to speak of the uneducated deaf and dumb as being on a level with the beasts that perish. His world-renowned disciple and successor, Abbé Sicard, declares that "a deaf person is a perfect cipher, a living automaton. He possesses not even that sure instinct by which the animal creation is guided. He is alone in nature, with no possible exercise of his intellectual faculties, which remain without action. As to morals, he does not even suspect their existence. The moral world has no being for him, and virtues and vices are without reality."

Other eminent teachers have put forth opinions equally derogatory. M. Guyot, of Groningen, one of the names that shine the brightest among the early benefactors of the deaf and dumb, assures us that "this unfortunate class are by nature cut off from the exercise of reason; they are, in every respect, like infants, and, if left to themselves, will be so always, only that they possess greater strength, and their passions, unrestrained by rule or law, are more violent, assimilating them rather to beasts than men."

An eminent German teacher, Herr Eschke, of Berlin, says: "The deaf and dumb live only for themselves. They acknowledge no social bond; they have no notion of virtue. Whatever they may do, we can impute their conduct to them neither for good nor for evil."

Another German teacher, Herr Caesar, of the school at Leipsic, founded by the celebrated Heinicke, the father of the German method of instruction, remarks that "the deaf and dumb, indeed, possess the human form, but this is almost all which they have in common with other men. The perpetual sport of impressions made upon them by external things, and of the passions which spring up in their own souls, they comprehend neither law nor duty, neither justice nor injustice, neither good nor evil; virtue and vice are to them as if they were not."

Dr. Barnard, to whom I am indebted for these citations, very justly and pertinently remarks that many of these instructors brought to their task the prejudices once universal,

and not yet extinct, which classed deaf-mutes among idiots. They seem, moreover, to have been unconsciously influenced by a desire to exaggerate the sad condition of the uneducated mute, so as to make a stronger appeal to public sympathy, and to set in a brighter light the success of their own labors by contrast with the dark condition of the being whose education they had undertaken.

There are not wanting testimonies on the other side of the question. I will here only cite that of M. Bébian, a younger associate of Sicard, in the institution at Paris, and the most able and accomplished teacher of deaf-mutes in his time. His opinion is thus expressed: "Deaf and dumb persons only differ from other men by the privation of a single sense. They judge, they reason, they reflect. And, if education exhibits them to us in the full exercise of intelligence, it is because the instructor has received them at the hand of Nature, endowed with all the intellectual faculties."

To reconcile these conflicting opinions of eminent authorities, we must recall the fact already stated, that there is an immense difference, both mental and moral, between a deaf-mute who has been neglected, and possibly hidden away from society as a family disgrace, (a treatment not unusual in the times before the zeal and success of De l'Epée made deaf-mutes objects of curiosity, attention, and wonder,) and a deaf-mute who has been blessed with kind companions, and has been encouraged and aided to enlarge and improve his pantomimic dialect. In a deaf-mute in the *former* condition, even the germs of the rational and moral faculties are scarcely manifested. In the latter, they have acquired a very considerable but somewhat peculiar development.

In treating of the psychological condition of the uneducated deaf-mute, we will take one of the average condition of the class—neither a victim of total neglect in childhood, nor the favored recipient of unusually kind, constant, and intelligent care. And here we must distinguish between what he is intellectually and what he is morally. By the effort to communicate his most obvious wants, and to bring himself into association with others, and by the reciprocal effect of

attention to these wants, and of response to his overtures, his mind is quickened into activity. The signs that spring up in his intercourse with his family may refer to all the more obvious interests of their mutual every-day life. He may be told to bring water from the spring, to call his father or brother, even to go to the store for certain articles. He may be told that the family will go to church after sleeping once, and that he will accompany them, or that he may ride to a neighbor's, or that a friend is coming to see him, and he will understand it all; but the moment that there is an attempt to communicate anything that has not been shown him, or that he has not seen, the effort fails. He obtains, if not a confused, at least a very erroneous idea. He is, therefore, left very much to his own conceptions. That he has an idea of cause and effect there is no doubt, from the recorded recollections of deaf-mutes concerning their days of ignorance. This idea is concrete in the sense that he seldom arrives at general conclusions, his judgment being exercised on particular cases that have fallen under his observation, and which he recognizes when they occur again. He knows that when it is cold he can obtain warmth by putting wood in the stove and lighting it; that if he leaves a pitcher of water out of doors on a cold night it will freeze, and the pitcher will break; that if he goes out in the rain he will be wet; that if he falls he will be hurt. By observing an effect familiar to him, he also knows what has produced it. He recalls past scenes which have been a part of his experience, and he anticipates what will happen on the morrow when a particular pleasure is promised him. He has, therefore, the power of memory, of analogy, and of imagination. He has, moreover, the association of ideas; for, in his efforts to communicate, it is observed that one thing will suggest another, and, in his silent communings with himself, he will have a succession of thoughts, one arising from another. In all this exercise of mind, except when he is actually conversing with others, he does not employ any vehicle of thought, not even signs. This is the invariable testimony of all deaf-mutes whom I have

questioned on this subject. *They think in images, and the signs they make grow out of and represent these images.*

Nor is this method of thought peculiar to deaf-mutes. The dreams which visit us in the hours of sleep are nothing more. The visions of inspired seers required careful subsequent effort to portray them in words. The poet reproduces, in the music of rhythm, the same ideal scenes that the painter presents to us on the canvas, and the converse is true that the painter is often the poet's best interpreter. It is thoughts without words that have immortalized Handel and Mozart and Beethoven, and given to their stirring symphonies a power that eloquence often strives for in vain. The blast of the bugle is a more inspiriting call than the captain's "Forward!" and the light streaming on the banner a more cheering encouragement than any shouted words of hope. The journalist gives us descriptions of scenes and incidents which he has viewed, and succeeds in conveying to us correct conceptions, only by attaining that precision in the use of words which will enable the reader to form a distinct picture in his mind. The historian must carry his imagination back to the past, and, so to speak, lose himself in it, to convey to our minds any just conception of what *was*. It is this principle which gives such popularity to illustrated periodicals, and which makes the actor an educator to a certain class of minds. The etymological signification of the word *idea*—what is beheld—is of itself an indication that at least a large class of our thoughts are but pictures in the mind.

The expression, then, that we think in words, means nothing more than that long practice has enabled us to associate some form of words directly with our thoughts; for the thought is always antecedent to the expression.

In generalization, it is true, words greatly assist in keeping before us a certain pivotal idea, but even this idea is but a synthesis of many concretes instantaneously made in the subtle alchemy of the mind. No true thinker gives words the prominence in his mental laboratory, either as writer or student. He painfully endeavors to represent, by approximating symbols, thoughts to which he feels he can never

give the exact expression, and he carefully analyzes, with patient toil, the words which others have presented as *their* embodiment of truth.

Educated deaf-mutes have furnished to us, by their recollections of the past, much that throws light upon the amount of knowledge they had acquired previous to the time when they were brought under systematic instruction.

The details and results of a searching inquiry into this subject are given in a paper on the "Notions of the Deaf and Dumb, especially on Religious Subjects," contributed by my venerable father, Dr. H. P. Peet, to the *Bibliotheca Sacra* of July, 1855. To renew the investigation, for the sake of originality, even if I might hope to bring it to as complete and satisfactory an issue, would be a work of supererogation. I, therefore, avail myself of Dr. Peet's labors, so far as they illustrate my present theme.

"Few, if any, of these unfortunate children," says Dr. Peet, "seem ever to have reflected on the origin of the universe or the necessity of a first cause for the phenomena of Nature. As one of them expresses it, they 'thought it was natural' that the world should be as it is. Some even fancied that those whom they saw to be old had ever been so, and that they themselves would ever remain children," [or at least had not learned to anticipate a time of old age for themselves.] "Those who had learned, by observation and testimony, the general law of progress from infancy to old age, supposed, if they attempted to think on the subject at all, that there had been an endless series of generations. But probably there are very few uninstructed deaf-mute children of ten or twelve who have reached such a point of intellectual development as even this idea implies. It is much easier to give to a deaf-mute, by means of rude and imperfect signs, the idea that there is some powerful being in the sky, than to explain or even hint that this being made the world. Hence it is that very few deaf-mutes have ever acquired, either from their own reflections or from the imperfect signs of their friends, any idea of the creation of the world, or even of the plants and animals on its surface. Nor need this

surprise us, when we reflect that the most enlightened nations of antiquity had not mastered this great idea. Ovid, writing in the learned and polished era of Augustus, expressed the popular belief of his time in the theory that all things were produced by the due union of heat and moisture.*

"Many deaf-mutes, however, whether from their own meditations, or from misunderstanding the signs of their friends, have acquired childlike ideas respecting the causes of certain natural phenomena; such as rain, thunder, and the motions of the heavenly bodies. Quite a number supposed that there were men in the sky who, at certain times, made themselves busy in pouring down water and firing guns. The notions of deaf-mutes on such matters are often amusing enough; but, when not derived from a misconception of the signs of their friends, are evidently formed in a spirit of analogy. * * * An English deaf-mute boy, observing that he could raise quite a strong wind with his mother's bellows, naturally concluded that the wind that sometimes blew off his hat in the street came from the mouth of a gigantic bellows. Neither does it seem that this belief was troubled by his inability to find the operator or the location of this bellows, for to one whose sphere of observation was so limited, and who could learn so little of the world beyond it from the testimony of others, the region beyond the circle of a few miles was as wholly unknown, and as open to the occupation of imaginary giants and engines and other figments of the imagination, as was ever the land of the Cimmerians to the Greeks, or the Fairy Land to the popular belief of the middle ages. Similar to this was the notion of a girl, who seems to have imagined that the plants which spring up annually in the fields and woods were like those in her mother's garden, planted and watered by 'some women,' an infantile conception, in which, however, may be traced the first

* Quippe ubi temperiem sumsere humorque calorque
Concipiunt: et ab his orientur cuneta duobus.
Metamorphoses, I., 8.

germ of the old Greek notions respecting nymphs and dryads. * * *

"One lad, struck by the similarity between flour falling in a mill and snow falling from the clouds, concluded that snow was ground out of a mill in the sky. Others supposed that the men with whom their imaginations, or the misconceptions of the signs of their friends, had peopled the sky, brought up water from the rivers or ponds, and dashed it about through holes in the heavenly vault. The more general belief seems, however, to have been that there was a great store of rain and snow in the sky, a matter no more to be wondered at than the abundance of earth and water below. Some suppose thunder and lightning to be the discharge of guns or cannon in the sky; a notion the converse of that well-known one of the savages, who, when they first met in battle a European armed with a musket, believed they had encountered a god armed with thunder and lightning. Others say they believe lightning to be struck from the sky by iron bars. They had doubtless observed the sparks struck by iron from stone."

Thus it is that human nature repeats its phenomena, and that deaf-mute children, left, by their inability to profit by the experience of their elders, in a prolonged infancy, exemplify, in their efforts to account for the phenomena of Nature, many of the fancies that prevailed in the infancy of society. The last idea cited bears a curious resemblance to the Homeric conception of Jupiter hurling the thunder-bolts forged by Vulcan.

In answer to the question whether they had any idea how the sun, moon, and stars were upheld in the sky, the uniform reply was that they had never thought about it. "It seems as natural to children that those bodies should keep their places above us as that the clouds or the sky itself should. * * * The stars in the view of many were candles or lamps lighted every evening for their own convenience by the inhabitants of the sky, a notion very natural to those who had had opportunities of watching the regular lighting at night of the street-lamps of a city. The moon was, to most of

those whose answers are before us, an object of greater interest than any of the other heavenly bodies. One imaginative girl fancied that she recognized in the moon the pale but kind face of a deceased friend; others thought that she continually followed them and watched their actions." A few regarded the moon with fear, while others thought she loved them.

The answers to the question, "Had you any idea of the existence of the soul as something distinct from the body, and which might be separated from it?" were uniformly in the negative.

"It is remarkable," says Dr. Peet, "that only one, out of more than forty whose statements are before us, seems to have imbibed any of the popular superstitions respecting ghosts. If the misfortune of the deaf and dumb prevents them from learning much truth, it also protects them in most cases from receiving those early impressions of superstitious terror and folly which it is often so difficult to get rid of in later life."

To the question "What were your thoughts and feelings on the subject of death? Did you know that you must yourself die?" Dr. Peet cites many interesting answers, which my limits compel me to omit. Their uniform tenor was to show that to the uneducated deaf-mute death is truly the king of terrors. Those who had not been taught the contrary by the signs of their friends cherished the belief that they could evade its power and live on forever. "We have heard of a lad," he says, "who, having observed that people who died had taken medicine, resolved to abstain from medicine as well as other hurtful things; an example of prudence worthy of general imitation." Another had entertained the horrible suspicion that the doctor's business was to poison off the sick; reminding us that tribes of savages have sometimes risen in fury and murdered missionaries, because the sick to whom they had given medicine had died.

"So far as we can learn from their statements," says Dr. Peet, "none of the deaf and dumb have originated the idea

of the existence of the soul after death, in a state separate from the body, and the attempts (unskilfully) made for this end, by many anxious parents, have at most given the child-like idea that the dead are taken bodily from their graves, or thrown bodily into a fire. The early impressions of certain German deaf-mutes, recorded by one of their number, (O. F. Kruse, of Schleswig,) were, that the bodies of the good remain uncorrupted in the grave, where they only slumber to be hereafter awakened, while those of the wicked rot and become the prey of worms. It is easy to understand that children who have never seen a corpse, except in the brief interval between death and burial, may suppose that the dead only sleep in the grave. One of the pupils in the New York Institution had been haunted by the terrible idea that, should she die and be buried, she might awake in the grave, and would be unable to call for help."

The general testimony of the deaf and dumb is, that before instruction they never had any idea whatever of the object of public or private worship, some probably taking the weekly assemblage at church as being as much a matter of course as any other periodical event; while others, if they tried to think about it, only added it to the long list of human actions which, in their darkened state, were incomprehensible to them. One or two seem to have made a shrewd guess at the secret motives of some outward professors, when they considered public worship as a recreation, and family prayer as a play; and the idea of another, that people met to do honor to the clergyman, might in some cases be pretty near the fact.

"To the same purport," says Dr. Peet, in summing up, "on all the points we have considered, is the testimony of many other deaf-mutes both in Europe and America. Nor have we ever learned of any well-authenticated case of a deaf-mute who gained any correct ideas on religious subjects by his own unaided powers of observation and reflection. We feel authorized, by the evidence before us, to deny that any deaf-mute has given evidence of having any innate or self-originating ideas of a supreme being, to whom love and

obedience are due, of a Creator, or of a superintending Providence, of spiritual existence, or of a future state of rewards and punishments." And this is the testimony of all who know the deaf and dumb thoroughly.

Yet the readiness with which deaf-mutes, at an early stage of their instruction, apprehend these great truths, the unquestioning faith with which they receive them, and the eagerness with which they cling to the hope of immortality, and especially to the promise that in heaven the deaf shall hear and the dumb join in the everlasting song of praise, conclusively show that the Creator has implanted in these children of silence a capacity for religious sentiment as fully as in their brothers and sisters who hear. And though St. Paul says, "Faith comes by hearing," he only meant to those who *can* hear. Had he ever known an educated deaf-mute, a spectacle which the world never saw till centuries after the great apostle had finished his course, he would have admitted that faith might come in the fullest measure through signs alone.

In a moral point of view the uneducated deaf-mute presents features of a still more interesting character. The idea of consequences he certainly imbibes whenever the government exercised over him is unvarying, whether for good or for evil. From certain acts he is deterred by his relation to certain persons, and to other acts he is in the same way stimulated. Under judicious control he comes to associate in his mind a line of conduct with what produces pain, and another line of conduct with what produces pleasure. Out of this grows a sort of conscience, which leads him to be sorrowful when he does certain things, and to be glad when he does the contrary. This conscience is entirely dependent upon the parent or other person to whom he is subjected. Given a good master, and he will be very likely to have a kind of moral sense that will be a safe guide in the life he leads, and will bring about habits which will be useful to him hereafter. Given a corrupt master, and the principle, that in the former case would have resulted in leading him to be *good*, will as certainly have the effect of making him *bad*. If the authority exercised be ty-

rannical, certain natures will rebel, and the most evil results will follow. If it be capricious, this moral sense will never exist. If no authority whatever be exercised at home, and he is left to his own devices, he will have as many consciences as there are persons he fears or desires to please. I have, in my mind, a boy now in the institution, whose moral education has been a work of peculiar difficulty. Though not deficient in intellect, easily pleased, and easily chagrined, no appeals to any of the higher motives seem to have the least effect upon him, not even an appeal to the affection borne him by a fond mother—alas! too fond. So far as emotion is concerned, he is not unlike Undine before she was endowed with a human soul.

From this it may be inferred that, by his own unaided, uninformed intellect, and uninstructed nature, the uneducated deaf-mute does not arrive at the idea of what is really right or wrong, and is ignorant of general law, either human or divine. He may be obedient, diligent, affectionate, habitually honest, but it will be owing to the influence of kind and firm control and good example, *not* to the higher moral and religious motives that are addressed to children who hear. He is too often self-willed, passionate, prone to secret vices; but this unfavorable phase of character is generally chargeable to early injudicious indulgence, the example of evil companions, and the lack of those *higher* motives that are supplied by religious education. He is *suspicious*, because he has been the butt of thoughtless companions. He lacks self-control, because he cannot, as well as others, appreciate the consequences of his actions. He *wishes*, as well as those who hear, to be *loved* and *respected*, and, like them, conceals his evil practices from those who he knows would disapprove of them. But he cannot distinguish between the approbation of the good and the mere complaisance of the unthinking; is apt to mistake the laughter of the latter for applause; and, when he is thwarted in desires, the folly and criminality of which he cannot appreciate, he is apt to think himself the victim of an unjust discrimination and oppression.

The view that has been taken of the intellectual and moral condition of the uneducated deaf-mute seems to settle the question of his criminal responsibility. One who knows and can know no more of law than what he can infer from the consequences which he has noticed are likely to follow from specific acts, who often mistakes his impulses for principles, and whose character is settled for him either by natural endowment or by the peculiar circumstances in which he may be placed, can hardly be considered as accountable in any ordinary sense of the term. Still, when he commits crime, he imperils the safety of the community, and violates the sanctity of the law, whose interference must in some way be invoked.

The two great classes of crime, viz., crimes against property and crimes against person, have given rise to proceedings of a very curious and interesting character when the criminal arraigned has been an uneducated deaf-mute.

Under the first head, the crime with him usually takes the form of theft, never of fraud; though sometimes it occurs that in the indulgence of anger or revenge he will injure property to an extent that, if the offence were committed by a hearing person, would subject him to the pains and penalties of the law.

In some cases occurring in France the plea was successfully advanced that a deaf-mute was not morally or legally responsible, and the criminals were dismissed, suffering only the detention before trial, which they probably regarded as the full punishment of their offence. They were perfectly aware that they did wrong, for they hid themselves to steal, and hid what they had stolen. This, in itself, it may be said, hardly exhibits more proof of intellect than is displayed every day by the sheep-stealing cur; but the deaf-mute, however uneducated, always displays a keen appreciation of the rights of property—knows pretty clearly what belongs to himself and what belongs to others; and, like children in general, is easily moved to bursts of passion by any interference with what he considers as belonging to himself. And that he steals with contrivance and in secret is a proof that he is

aware that he will be punished if detected. For this class of offences, therefore, it would seem as though moral, if not legal, responsibility could be attributed to him, though his unfortunate condition should certainly move his judges to leniency in pronouncing sentence upon him. And this is the view that has prevailed in more recent cases.

There is, however, a different class of cases in which the law comes into collision with the private rights of property. For instance, in a recorded case, near Rodez, in France, officers were sent to a farm to seize property for debt. In so doing, they treated with roughness the peasant, whom they caught in the attempt to drive off his cow. The deaf-mute son of the latter, a vigorous youth of twenty, seeing, as he thought, the rights of property violated, fell upon the aggressors and soon put all three to flight. Summoned with his father before the tribunals for this grave offence against the law, he recognized in court his late antagonists, pointed them out as robbers, and was with difficulty restrained from renewing the chastisement he had inflicted on them. He carried with him the full sympathy of the public and of the jury, and was acquitted on the ground that, being entirely ignorant of the legal rights in the case, he had only obeyed one of the first laws of Nature in defending his father and his property.

The class of crimes against the person presents greater difficulty, mainly from the extreme punishment which the law inflicts upon the highest of these crimes. If human law had never assumed the high and solemn prerogative of taking human life, the question of moral responsibility would not have been invested with such interest and importance in a legal point of view. A punishment that is irreparable, and, if erroneous, is in itself a great and irreparable wrong, startles the conscience, and leads it to demand indubitable authority for a punishment that is in no wise reformatory, and to welcome exceptions to the rule of life for life. This authority, and this rule of exceptions, are supposed to be found in the doctrine of moral responsibility and irresponsibility. It is assumed that the man who takes human life with pre-

meditation thereby forfeits his own, and knows beforehand that he does so; whereas he who strikes a blow in the sudden heat of passion, not intending to take life, is not responsible to the full extent of life for life if the blow proves fatal.

Another class of exceptions is that of idiots and maniacs, to whom guiding reason being denied by the act of God, they are held not to be responsible for their criminal acts, though the safety of society may demand that they be held in duress. The same principle has been naturally applied to the deaf and dumb, who, by the Roman code, being classed with idiots and the demented, in all the points of civil disability, denied the control of their own property in life, and precluded from altering its descent by will, were, by necessary consequence, classed with them also in the matter of criminal responsibility for criminal acts; being also, like them, subject to legal restraint when dangerous.

The cases in which uneducated deaf-mutes have been arraigned for murder are painfully numerous, considered in proportion to the number of this class of persons. The able and exhaustive treatise of Dr. H. P. Peet, on "The Legal Rights and Responsibilities of the Deaf and Dumb," gives the particulars of nearly a dozen such cases taken from European reports and journals, to which have since been added some in this country.*

The cases of Jane Campbell in Scotland, and of Esther Dyson in England, uneducated deaf-mute women, each of whom was charged with the murder of her illegitimate child, can be found in "Beck's Medical Jurisprudence." In the former case, after much argument and many doubts, the majority of the court decided that the prisoner was capable of

* This valuable monogram was printed in the *Proceedings of the Fourth Convention of Instructors of the Deaf and Dumb*, which is now very scarce. A reprint for private circulation is also quite exhausted. An imperfect copy appeared in one of the numbers of the *American Journal of Insanity* for the year 1856. It is especially valuable to the legal profession, for the full details it gives of the conflicting opinions of many lawyers and judges both in Europe and America; among other points, on the ability of an uneducated deaf-mute to make a contract or to give evidence in a court of justice, and on the mode of ascertaining his wishes and taking his testimony.

being put upon trial; but her counsel interposed the objection that she could not be tried till it was explained to her that she was at liberty to plead guilty or not; and, as no means could be found of explaining this to her, on this mere point of technicality the trial was stayed. In the latter case, the prisoner was judged incapable of being tried and conducting her defence, and was remanded to close custody, as in the case of a lunatic, till the king's pleasure should be known.

In neither of these cases was the decision based upon the ground of want of moral responsibility, the difficulty lying in the inability of the prisoner to comply with the established forms of legal proceedings; but we have an interesting report of a German case reproduced in the *American Annals of the Deaf and Dumb* for January, 1871, in which the accused, Johann Schmidt, an uneducated deaf and dumb shoemaker, was held morally and legally unaccountable for having killed his employer with a shoemaker's knife. It was shown that the master was a man of violent and brutal character, and that the deaf-mute felt, or professed to feel, in fear for his own life. But his defence turned mainly on the question of responsibility. His counsel urged that, "in the case of a person fifteen years of age,* who is endowed with all his faculties, the law doubts whether he is accountable; but the accused, in respect to intellectual development and to responsibility, is not to be compared with a hearing person fifteen years of age. The laws are not known to the accused, and no one can be tried by laws which he does not know." This reasoning had the effect to secure the full acquittal of the prisoner, who, however, seems to have been quite intelligent for one of his class, and was even able to allege distinctly, by signs, in his own defence, that, alarmed by the threatening gestures of his master, "dark night came upon his mind."

Other cases have been recorded in which deaf-mutes have, sometimes openly, sometimes lying in wait, murdered those who have offended them. Their advocates generally put in

* So in Germany. Under English common law, we think, fourteen.

the plea of absence of responsibility, but in most cases, at least those under French law, the plea has been overruled, and the prisoner put upon his trial. His misfortune, however, almost invariably moves the jury and the court, if he is found guilty, to a recommendation of mercy. In France, where a verdict of "guilty, with extenuating circumstances," has the effect to save the life of the criminal, this verdict was rendered in all the cases of deaf-mute murderers which we have seen, though one or two were marked with circumstances of unusual atrocity. The fearful ignorance and neglected state of some uneducated deaf-mutes are justly considered extenuating circumstances when there are no others.

I will close this branch of the subject by a sketch of a recent case which has especially attracted my attention, from the fact that I was summoned to appear in it as an expert:

In Ulster county, in this State, a deaf-mute boy of mixed parentage, African on his mother's side only, born in a poor-house, instead of being sent, as he might have been, to an institution, where public provision had been made for the education of himself as well as all his fellows in misfortune, was bound, during his minority, to a wealthy farmer. Certainly a great wrong was inflicted on Levi Bodine (the name given the boy by his mother, a name he himself never heard or knew) in depriving him of the means of education. And great wrong, sooner or later, generally entails severe retribution.

The boy's employer was a respectable and intelligent man; but did he ever seriously reflect that he had assumed a very high and solemn responsibility in taking charge of an immortal soul—giving color and shape by his management, or want of management, to the whole future of a lad whose strong and passionate nature might, under skilful and judicious care, have been trained to form an affectionate friend, a worthy and useful citizen, and a sincere worshiper of the Most High? Unable to reason with his deaf-mute apprentice, or to appeal to his better feelings, his employer seems to have contented himself with constant appeals to personal authority.

One day Mr. Hasbrouck insisted on making the deaf-mute do some work which he did not wish to do. According to the statement of the latter, made in signs to the writer, and one of his colleagues who accompanied him, the master used violence to that end, and the mute, like a half-tamed lion, roused to sudden fury, slew his supposed oppressor with an axe, which he was using at the time.

We are told that great indignation was aroused in the neighborhood by this murder of a respected citizen, on what seemed slight provocation. The deaf-mute could not tell his side of the story, and there was no one to tell it for him.

When the deaf-mute homicide was arraigned before a jury empanelled to test the condition of his mind, his counsel presented the plea of want of capacity to be tried, which they found in their books had been presented in similar cases in England.

At the opening of the trial, the prisoner's counsel claimed that he was unable to communicate with his client in any way; that it was impossible to convey to his mind the different degrees of homicide; that there was no way to inform him of his right to challenge jurors; that he could not be sworn in his own behalf, and that the law provided that no man should be tried who was not, at the time of the trial, able to understand the details of the case and prepare a suitable defence.

The district attorney, on the other hand, said that the prisoner's sanity was undisputed; there was no malformation of the brain; the neighbors and acquaintances of the accused were able to communicate with him by signs and make themselves understood. After hearing the arguments and the testimony of neighbors and the experts, Judge Hogeboom stopped the proceedings, expressing the opinion that it was of no use to send the case to a jury, and that, before the prisoner could be tried, he should be instructed. The prisoner was remanded to the jail, but the sheriff took no pains to carry out the recommendation of the judge, perhaps from the conviction that no teacher could be found to

instruct the poor deaf-mute, merely to prepare him for the gallows.

At a subsequent term of the court the case was again brought up for trial, this time before Judge Boardman. The jury disagreed, and Bodine was left in jail. But, being quite docile and harmless when kindly treated, and showing no disposition to escape, as he had no home to go to, he was soon allowed liberty to go out by day, returning to his prison quarters at night.

There is not the least probability that he will again be brought up for trial. Meantime, he is left wholly without instruction, even the simplest religious instruction, for the rules of the institution very properly preclude any one from being an inmate who has been guilty of serious crime against the person, and there is no one in the neighborhood of the jail qualified to undertake the instruction of a deaf-mute.

This recent case in our own vicinity, added to many more remote in time and place, points to conclusions which cannot be evaded. One is the duty which society owes to itself, not only of providing for the education of all deaf-mutes, but of making it imperative upon the parent or guardian, in each case, to secure to the child laboring under this misfortune the benefits within his reach. To him it implies vastly more than the same term used in connection with the hearing child, for the latter can never be said to be uneducated in the sense in which the deaf-mute is uneducated. To the hearing child every word spoken in his presence is a means of intellectual development. Every person, literate or illiterate, with whom he comes in contact, is for the time his conscious or unconscious teacher. In fact, school gives him so small a portion of the knowledge he possesses that it may be considered rather the regulator than the source of his attainments. In learning to read and write he simply acquires the ability to recognize and express, in alphabetical forms, a language he already knows; and in studying the other ordinary branches of education, he but learns a few principles which account for facts of which he

is often already cognizant. And, if he never went to school, he would, under the influences prevailing in a good home or a virtuous and intelligent community, learn all that was necessary to enable him to lead a life of rectitude here, and secure the hope of salvation hereafter. To the deaf-mute, however, education means *everything;* it means home, and hope, and happiness; it means self-control and virtue; it means the full and free exercise of all the rights, immunities, and privileges which belong to humanity. Understanding and acknowledging his obligations to society and to God, he becomes amenable to law; and, if placed in circumstances in which his character or his conduct comes under the review of the ministers of justice, he is able, either by direct verbal communication, or by signs in which he can give full expression to his thought through a skilful interpreter, to conduct his defence, and obtain all the consideration that is his due.

The State of New York has made full provision for the instruction of all deaf-mutes within its limits between the ages of six and twenty-five, and grants to those who commence at the earlier age sufficient time to make attainments which, when the intelligence of the individual is equal to it, fall little, if at all, short of those made by students in our higher seminaries of learning.

With a liberality, too, unequalled in this country, it has, in making this provision, given a choice of method and even of religion.

As the law now stands, all officers, charged with the care of those who, on account of poverty, are supported at the public expense, are obliged to place the deaf-mutes under their care at some one of the institutions for this class which the State has recognized. I would, however, that it should go further, and make it the duty of certain designated public officers to seek out all uneducated deaf-mutes, and require that they be educated.

Another of the conclusions to which we are led is, that the treatment of criminal cases, in which a deaf-mute is defendant, should be settled by statute.

In every case that now occurs, the prosecution argues, from the intelligence the deaf-mute manifests in various ways, such as his ability to communicate by signs to a certain extent, or to obey given directions, and also from the indications he gives of consciousness of guilt, that he has moral and legal responsibility, and therefore should be brought to trial and punishment. The defence argues, on the contrary, that his condition as an uneducated deaf-mute, if acknowledged, being *prima-facie* evidence of insanity, within the meaning of the law, he cannot be put upon trial even to ascertain his mental condition. If the court fails to sustain the defence in its assumption, there follows a long argument as to which side must bear the burden of proof, in which so much doubt is raised by conflicting opinions, that, as occurred in the case of Levi Bodine, in which two juries were empanelled under different judges, one judge decides that it rests with the prosecution, and the other that it rests with the defence.

As it seems to me, both the prosecution and the defence are in error: the former, as to the fact that an uneducated deaf-mute can be considered responsible in any such sense that the law may visit his act with punitive treatment; the other, that he is to be classed with either the idiot or insane. Mentally and morally he is much more in the condition of a child, though his physical powers may be those of a man. And yet it may be conceived that both sides can base, if not *sound*, at least *plausible*, arguments on the law as it stands. Whether this be so or not, the judge finds it difficult to expound the law in such a manner as to make it clear to the jury; and the jury, deliberating on a case which is novel in their experience, either yield to sympathies which are touched by the helpless condition of the prisoner, or terminate the case by a disagreement in their verdict.

Law is sustained by sanctions. But sanctions are worthless in the case of a human being who can never learn anything concerning them. An uneducated deaf-mute might come under the condemnation of the law and be punished, and yet his case could have no effect upon any other uned-

ucated deaf-mute in deterring him from the commission of crime.

It would be a very simple and easy rule of law that the guilt or innocence of an uneducated deaf-mute should be established so as to amount to a strong probability, by testimony entirely independent of himself, and that, if he be guilty, he should be provided with a place of detention near some institution for the deaf and dumb, and receive instruction daily from such teachers as could be detailed therefrom; that, if innocent, he should be sent to the institution itself to participate in its benefits; and that, in either case, so soon as he was fitted by education to take his part in the great drama of life, he should be left free to do so, untrammelled by the fact that, at a time when he had not reached a point where he could be held morally and legally responsible, he had been brought face to face with violated law.

If this distinguished Society be induced, by the arguments that have been presented this evening, to urge upon the legislature the enactment of such a statute, a practical result will have been secured of more value than the mere interest which attaches to the discussion of mental phenomena, however striking or peculiar.

THE MUSIC ESSENCE.

BY FITZ HUGH LUDLOW.

[This story is reprinted from the New York *Commercial Advertiser* of December 31, 1861. Its author was at one time a frequent visitor at the New York Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, one of whose teachers had been his college class-mate and most intimate friend, and the story was suggested by the silvery laugh and remarkable grace and skill in dancing of a young lady pupil of that institution. The idea that definite analogies exist between sounds and colors is not a new one, but it has always been our impression that the conception of an apparatus for conveying to the minds of deaf-mutes a comprehension of the relations of sounds by means of colors was original with the writer of this story. This may be the case; but Diderot, in his "*Lettre sur les Sourds et Muets*," mentions a machine designed to represent sounds by colors, the invention of one Père Castel, which it was believed would be of great

service to the deaf and dumb, and which was taken to the Paris Institution for experiment with the pupils. Diderot does not describe this contrivance, but speaks of it as very ingenious; it probably proved of little practical value. If, as is quite possible, Mr. Ludlow had seen this reference to Castel's invention, it does not detract from the ingenuity of his own imaginary apparatus herein described.—Ed. Annals.]

I.

The first five years of my manhood were too painful to be dwelt upon. Years, it may be, of much wrong-doing—years certainly of great ignorance and unwisdom; years also of suffering, like the inextricable entanglements of some slowly-thickening nightmare. Let them be summed up in this: that without any world-knowledge I went into the world; without business capacity I attempted business; with a morbid nature, which felt the breath of real life as a flayed surface feels a draught of winter wind, I rashly thrust myself into the tumult of a great city, and struggled for prizes with the strong. I had a partner. At this day the smile with which I speak that word is not one of bitterness, but simply of calm, experienced pity for the man that long ago I ceased to be. For what partnership can there be between strength and weakness—the bold, pushing mind of the market-place, the self-distrustful, shrinking, moody nature of the closet? Because I did not know this, or, knowing, madly shut my eyes to it, I failed in my first scheme of life.

There were a few bright days when the venture looked prosperous, and cause delayed asserting itself in effect. I verily believed that I had conquered the course of nature—that even I might win the race of the world. Then came long days of growing doubt, of mutual coldness between my partner and me. Angry recrimination followed, and at last, with a few fierce words, we parted.

At this moment, though such impartial calm has succeeded to the former tempestuous bitterness, I cannot tell which was in the wrong. The whole affair was an inexplicable enigma to me. I was accused of fraud, but I could recollect no fraud. Of deceit; but my brain was so distracted by things I had no talents for that I knew not true from false. Of

treachery; how could any man enmeshed like me beguile another?

After that there were lawsuits, arrests—yes, even one short imprisonment. During that last, which continued two days and nights, nothing but the absolute bareness of all means in my narrow cell prevented my ending that miserable life of mine.

At last—with my once sufficient property dwindled to a pauper's pension—the law let me go. The fraud which I could not remember, which I never knew when I committed it, which at this day I do not understand, was only not quite proved. My counsel told me that I had escaped by a hair's-breadth, and I was informed by others that he had worked night and day to save me. I have wondered since how many men like me may be shuddering all night long in the stone coffins of Auburn, of Sing-Sing? *Væ victis!* Prison is for the weak as well as the wicked.

Thus I passed the first five years of my manhood. Can you wonder that I cast them behind me—that I drop them in the depths of the sea? Let them be forgotten, unspoken things.

But because a man cannot be quite miserable while the destinies have some work left for him to do, a great kindness was shown to me in that hour when I found myself penniless, disgraced, utterly bewildered—and twenty-six years old.

An old friend of my father's—head of a school for deaf-mutes—invited me to become one of his assistants. I accepted the offer as if it had been a call into Heaven from the beckoning hands of the angels! I had been thinking of the silence of death; here were *life* and silence possible. No more voices, no more cries of conflict or of pain; but a great overshadowing rest and hush. This was better than being rich again, with one more chance to risk my ruin; and for the first time in months I felt my eyes grow wet, and thanked God.

Seven o'clock of a Saturday evening in September saw me within the walls of the institution for the first time. A mute

servant-maid opened the door of the great front hall; a mute porter carried my trunks up the broad staircase to my room; and, while I stood waiting and wondering at the solemn silence which reigned through that immense home of seven hundred living souls—looking up at the high arched ceiling of spotless white, and the heavy doors of shining oak, with a feeling that all this largeness of proportion must be one of the traits of a dream in which spirits were thronging around me, silent to *me* only, because I was mortal—my friend came down the opposite corridor and spoke my name. Not a look, not a tone in his voice, recalled the past, as with a few kind words he welcomed me *home*.

"You will find your room ready for you," said he. "You must be dusty and hungry. After you change your clothes come down to my parlor—No. 30—and take supper with me. At eight o'clock the pupils hold one of their Saturday evening *soirées* in the large assembly-room. It is the only time during the week that the girls' and boys' departments meet on a social footing. They have games—and many of them dance very prettily. If you are not too tired, this will be a fine opportunity for you to become acquainted with them and their peculiar characteristics. What do you say?"

"That it will interest me greatly. I'll be with you in five minutes."

Supper being finished, we repaired to the assembly-room. This was a house in itself—one hundred feet in length, sixty in breadth, and with a ceiling twenty-five feet high. Its floor had no carpet—and needed none—for its planks of yellow pine were daintily clean, and so beautifully variegated by the darkened, natural grain of the wood, that a refined eye felt no desire to replace them, even by mosaics. In this immense hall, beneath brilliant gas-lights, were gathered all but those very youngest pupils of the institution who had by this time been fast asleep for an hour in the baby-beds of their department. Every age above the child of seven or eight years was represented in this concourse. To my surprise, many of the pupils were full-grown young men and women. The larger portion of them were dressed in that

cheap, neat uniform of blue and white check blouses and gray pantaloons, for which the State contributes raw material, and the apprentice tailors of the institution do the making up—or dark-blue dresses and white aprons, from the same warehouse, and of like home construction. A hundred, it may be, of both sexes, were paying-pupils, from families more or less opulent—and these were permitted to dress as they chose, within the boundaries of elegant simplicity. Notwithstanding this discrepancy in attire, and the social interval it plainly indicated, a most democratic equality of feeling seemed to pervade the whole party. Check and blue were at ease in the presence of silk and broadcloth; the soft, white fingers that were born to gloves, unshrinkingly clasped the tough, brown hands of labor in all the common games.

Dr. Gaskell and I took seats on a sofa near the door, where we could watch the universal merriment without appearing to intrude the presence of a stranger.

"Do they never *laugh?*" I asked.

"Sometimes; but the sound is not pleasant to hearing ears. It is harsh, because they are without any test for its modulations. As they grow up they become aware of this, and put a restraint upon themselves. The younger children laugh like wild beasts—there, you hear that burst from those little fellows at the other end of the room? How jarring it seems! The older, more refined pupils, unless in severe pain, never venture an audible sound."

At this instant a low, silvery gurgle of laughter, like a wood-robin's evening note or the tone of a delicate harmonic glass, welled up from a throng at our side.

"Ah!" said Dr. Gaskell, "I should have made one exception. We have a most remarkable girl here who has never become entirely inaudible. It was she who laughed then. And she always laughs in that tone. How she contrives to make her voice so sweet is a never-ceasing enigma to me. If I were superstitious I should believe that her inner ear is in communication with the angels; that she hears *their* laugh and repeats it in her own. In twenty-five years'

acquaintance with every grade and variety of deaf-mutes I have never met a parallel instance."

"Are you sure that she does not hear in some slight degree?"

"Perfectly sure. Her external sense of sound is as near the absolute zero point as the organs can possibly be reduced. I asked myself the same question, trying to find a clue to her remarkable idiosyncracy, till last fourth of July, when I saw my naughty little boy fire a pistol close beside her ear without in the least startling her."

"What is her name?"

"Margaret Somers."

"And how old is she?"

"Seventeen. She has been here since she was nine. Nearly half her life. I expect that we must part with her year after next, for her adopted father, Major Braithwaite, is determined that she shall be graduated as soon as possible. His only real relationship to her is that of second cousin, but I believe he loves her as well as he might have loved wife and children. He has never married—she seems all in all to him. He comes to see her whenever he can get furlough, and has only permitted her to stay with us so long because he is satisfied that she has great genius, and wishes it cultivated to the utmost. I agree with him—she is a wonderful girl. But see—they are getting up a dance!"

"Where is the music?"

"Ha, ha! You are betrayed into the question that everybody else from outside asks, when I invite him to a dance of the deaf-mutes! Think again; what good would music do them?"

"How absurd in me! Of course! But what pleasure can there be in dancing without it? And how can they keep time?"

"They *do* take great pleasure in it. As to the fact of their keeping time, you will see for yourself presently. Of its reason, you are as good a judge as I. It's all conjecture, but you can choose between the opinion I threw out just now, that Margaret Somers, who almost always leads them, hears

spirit music, and they follow her measure with their eyes, and another one of a phrenological nature, to the effect that every man has an organ of time independent of these fleshy flaps which we hear with, and measures ideal successions quite inaudible externally."

The set had taken the floor. Eight of the older pupils stood *en carré*, waiting for some signal, as you and I would pause for the music to begin. I did not need to be told which of the eight was Margaret Somers. Standing opposite us, in the head couple, her great blue eyes looking far away and half upward, her head inclined as if listening, her hands extended winningly but beseechingly, their gesture full of wonderful expression, like one who asks silence in a loving tone, her almost aerial figure swaying unconsciously with that dramatic grace which none but the deaf-mute can ever attain, which in the deaf-mute is the embodiment of the very inmost soul of language, she gave the signal and the dance began.

I could not have believed it! "Wonderful! wonderful!" I kept saying to Dr. Gaskell, as the silent dancers went gliding through the evolutions of their quadrille, and I, compelled by the absence of all other music, and the suggestions of their inimitable motion, hummed to myself a reminiscence of those strains to which I had so often kept gay time during the years which now were forever cast behind me.

Like some poor star-gazer, straining from his cold pinnacle to come at the very heart of those far torch-bearers on the Olympian course of the universe—enamored of their glory, awe-struck at the fleetness of their tireless glancing round the cycles, and certain that they run to the measure of some infinite music, could he but hear it—I bent further and further forward, devouring the glad faces of these silent dancers with my eyes, until the last foot paused, and I leaped to my feet, trembling strangely.

"How pale you are!" said Dr. Gaskell. "Do you feel ill?"

"No; but this dancing affects me very remarkably—*they must hear! she*, at least."

"I assure you they do not. Try it—call 'Margaret' in your loudest voice."

I hardly durst make the venture, so sure was I that it would startle her, but I did it. And the result was just what any unimpassioned spectator might have foreseen.

The doctor arose, and, catching Margaret Somers's eye, signalled to her. With the unembarrassed, springy footstep of a child she came to us, and the doctor told her in the sign-language that I was the new teacher. For a moment she measured me from head to foot—not staring at me, but gliding over me with a ripple of quiet sight—then smiled, and confidingly took my extended hand.

"Do you hear at all?" asked Dr. Gaskell, manually, translating to me the conversation as it proceeded.

She touched her ears, and shook her head.

"Do you know what *music* is?"

"Oh, yes," she answered, her face gladdening suddenly, like a hillside when the clouds break.

"What is music?"

For a moment she paused, her face changing into that expression of deep concentration which is so well-known to those familiar with the deaf, and which is interpreted even by those who have longest known them, as "*waiting to be inspired.*" Then she answered in signs so marvellously *vital* that I had no need of Dr. Gaskell's tongue-translation.

"*Music is the heart's feeling of God close by, when He touches us in quick throbs, and we try to measure them.*"

I lay thinking of that answer all night. It seemed to ensphere like a great soul all that the masters have sung and written, from the day that Israel rejoiced passing through the sea, to the last echo of Bertramo's tremendous entreaty in *Robert le Diable.*

II.

Three months had passed away since my coming to the institution, and in that time I had made no mean progress in the language of the hands. *Hands* I say advisedly, for it is a common error among outsiders to suppose that the

ordinary intercourse of the deaf and dumb is carried on by means of the *fingers* merely; in other words, that they *spell* out their thoughts by the alphabet. Whereas, the truth is that this admirable alphabet of theirs is seldom used, because it is seldom needed, a system of pantomime, far superior in all qualities of grace and expressiveness to any seen upon the stage, superseding it for all ordinary purposes, and indeed far more accurately and rapidly conveying delicate shades of meaning than any possible alphabetic speech, save in the rare cases where some profound or novel metaphysical assertion has to be conveyed. Even in such instances I have seen the sign-language carried, by preference, to the very furthest limits of its capability, and many of the abstruser tenets of Whateley or of Hickok, which a speaking teacher has required three readings to master, have been pantomimically given to my perfect understanding by a deaf-mute class in logic or mental philosophy.

In the alphabet, also, I was literally "*factus ad unguem.*" But as yet my province lay among the middle classes of pupils only. *Why*, will be very evident. The dormant or just awakened minds of the younger children need all the practised patience, ingenuity, and technical knowledge of their intellectual processes which can be grouped together in the most experienced teacher, to conduct the delicate first steps of their thinking and communicating life. For this reason, a highly-developed deaf-mute, if he has the rare faculty of meek forbearance, is often their best master—as being the true "*hegemon*," the leader who never keeps farther ahead than the ranks can see him. Next in importance and dignity of requirements is the teacher who takes charge of the highest and graduating classes, composed of such pupils as have emerged from the workshop of the merely objective faculties, and must now be indoctrinated into truths demanding all the more inward implements of the mind in their subtlest exercise.

Accordingly, it was only in the evenings that I could prosecute my study of that wonderful new science, Margaret Somers. I improved every hour of those, I can assure you.

I set myself to the work of learning her as I would a system of philology, or the *Mécanique Céleste*. After tea, it was customary for Dr. Gaskell to invite several of the older pupils into his parlor, where for the time being we all threw off the trammelling relations of master and scholar, and talked together on pure friendly terms. Two of the deaf-mutes who frequented these *conversazioni* possessed the auditory faculty just so far as this—that, by opening their mouths over the strings of a piano or guitar, they could catch the very faintest shadows of its vibrations through the Eustachian tube, and enjoy the thin ghost of the music rather as an impulse than a sound. It was both touching and amusing to see these poor outcasts from the world of musical delights bending over the sounding-board of Mrs. Gaskell's piano, listening literally with open mouth, and holding their breaths as in the presence of some strange, beautiful angel, whose magic harp-strings of tenuous air they feared to shatter by a sigh of bliss. As Mrs. Gaskell played them some glad, resounding strain—the Wedding March from Midsummer Night's Dream, for instance, which was their favorite—I have many a time seen them press their handkerchiefs to their eyes, half to let the quivering chords meet them in a sacred solitude of sense, and half to catch the tears which were falling thick and fast like rain in darkness.

On such occasions Margaret Somers sat far apart from them, her usually bright face settled into an expression of intense melancholy. She had not even their poor relic of a sense. And invariably after the playing had ceased she would ask them with great interest what music they had been hearing to-night—if they enjoyed it as much as ever, and *what it was like.*

I fancy that most of us who have hearing ears would be puzzled by that question. Imagine it asked in Fifth avenue or Beacon street of a lady just come back from *Don Giovanni*, her opera cloak, as you may say, still fluttering with the rush of bravos, and one or two little tremulous notes of Zerlina lingering like frightened birds caught between its

folds. "What was Vedrai Carino *like* to-night?" I wonder how she would answer!

But the deaf-mutes who heard with their mouths seemed to find no such puzzle. They took the question quite as a matter of course, and made replies that, to us, were very curious. Once, one of them told Margaret that the Wedding March was like a bountiful peach-tree, whose fruit ripened so fast that you could see the down blush deeper and deeper after the fashion of a young girl's cheeks, and, growing heavier till the twigs bent almost to the ground, fell off, and then, becoming alive, danced away through the air to turn into a sunset! You may laugh at this, but it gave Margaret great pleasure. She had a mind which could find reality in the ghost of their ghost, and re-embody it for herself into some such weird Wedding March as I think Mendelssohn heard when he caught at least its negative daguerreotype on his score. By a singular coincidence I have also heard the two deaf-mutes describe Verdi's great Zingarella to her, simultaneously, as "the brightest possible Northern Lights."

It was on this last occasion, and by its suggestion, that an idea which for months had been lying chaotic in my mind began to find an axis for itself and take on crystalline form.

First, I thought how strange it was that these two friends of Margaret habitually preferred the higher kinds of music, music for which nine-tenths of hearing people, in this country at least, have just as much *penchant* as Chopin or Thalberg have for Old Dog Tray. By the way, this latter was the very air which Mrs. Gaskell tried on them one evening, when they replied, with an effort of great politeness, that it was very nice *noise*. We, the hearing people, all laughed very heartily at this, but *they* saw nothing strange in it, and supposed the distinction one which everybody made in the given case. It was evident, therefore, that their pleasure in music consisted in no mere passive impression of the auditory nerve, but that they possessed musical *feeling* of a very marked order. How could this be, on the common assumption that

all internal organs must be developed through the outer? Must there not be, on the other hand, a vast possibility of culture for this inner sense from inner sources, and through the other still acute passages of external impression, as our minds may be lifted by the music of a dream? And if so, was it not likely that Margaret Somers, superior to these two as she was in all spiritual perceptions, and analogical expressions of rhythm, had the internal organ of melodies and chords developed in the deep laboratory which we called silence to a still greater degree? Then, also, their translations of music into form and color gave me a hint—which I had been for months growing more and more willing to use for *her*—because—but never mind now— I am anticipating.

Why might not I be the one whom Divine Music had chosen to carry her message to that longing spirit?

This was the last bead in the rosary of the thoughts which I counted on that evening in the parlor. I had come to the cross—a long, hard work to be done—but I did not grudge it. Again, when we had separated for the night, I lay awake, hour after hour, considering at which end I should take hold of it. Then the finger of dreams put itself forth and touched the right place, without its aerial print vanishing.

III.

Old John Bull, "Tunefulle Maister Bull, of Gresham," as his contemporaries used to call him, remarks in the course of some fragmentary personal recollections he has left us that the greatest enjoyment of his own musical compositions was not vouchsafed him at the time of their public performance, nor even during his own private renderings of the same; but that while he perused his completed score in the perfect quiet of the music-loft at midday, a divine delight ever seized him, and the spirit of his notes clothed themselves in an harmonious body, infinitely more splendid than any audible song. This fact made it possible for him to read music—not in the common sense—but as he would swim in the deep summer sea of a rare book, revelling in

all the sweet meanings of the author, yet never speaking a single word aloud.

Remembering this fact, I reflected that if Margaret Somers had ever possessed the faculty of hearing, and developed her musical perception by a scientific course of training, she might now read music after Maister Bull's fashion, and enjoy it to a similar degree.

The form which her problem consequently took was this: Is there no method by which the scientific relations of *pitch* (*time* I was sure she had become acquainted with already) may be communicated to the mind through other adits than the ear? Music in its pure scientific aspect is quite independent of sound, (uses sound only as its ordinary normal *expression*,) and by all the more delicate intellects, the poets especially, is constantly translated according to a system of analogies into other than audible forms. Rossini is called *florid*, but his roulades have no effect of garlands to the *eye*, no fragrance to the *nose*. Verdi, they tell us, is *brilliant*, but who *sees* him shine? And the painters find no difficulty in understanding a picture's *tone*.

All music, it seemed to me, finally resolved itself into a science of *tensions*, and one nerve as well as another may convey the relations of tension, provided that we attain the means best calculated to awake their idea through the sense. The most delicate receptacles for external impression still left to Margaret Somers were sight, touch, and smell. After long thought, I most unwillingly gave up all idea of attempts to communicate through the last of these, not because I abjured the life-long conviction that the olfactory sense is next to sight in its capacity for receiving the most delicate impressions, but because as yet its very ethereality has prevented any true science of its phenomena. Through sight and touch, therefore, I must operate alone.

For a month, without communicating my plans to any one, not even the object of them, I spent every hour of leisure in elaborating a system of means.

At the expiration of that time, I told Margaret Somers that I would teach her music.

My earnestness, and the very fact of my making such a statement at all, opened her great blue eyes wider than I had ever seen them. "You forget," she signed, and put her fingers on her poor dead ears.

"Yes," I replied; "but you have eyes and fingers."

"I would give them away willingly for ears—even such ears as John's and Augusta's," (the deaf-mutes who heard with their mouths.)

"You shall keep those and have these," I answered. "Are you willing to try it? You will have to study hard if I am your teacher, but I am sure I *can* teach you."

"Will it give me great *pain?*"

"Are you afraid of pain?"

A quick scorn trembled over her lip, and she made a gesture as if the idea were some tangible bad thing which she would brush away.

"Afraid? No, indeed! But I have been praying for a year that God would give me hearing, even with torture; and I was wondering whether He had answered me to the utmost."

"No, dear soul; it will give you no pain. I have been praying God for you, too, without any request for the risk of torture; and I hope He will answer us both in His gentlest fashion. How could He torture you? Don't you remember your definition of music that you gave me the first time I ever saw you, 'God closely touching us in quick throbs?' Is it not good to have God close by; yes, if we shall be blessed in our good work, to have Him even closer?"

"It is *good.* But sometimes, even *now*, in His veiled comings, it is almost *unbearable.*"

"Perhaps that may be because He is *veiled;* because of His dimness and mystery. To know Him nearer is to love Him more, you know. Are you willing to try it?"

She put her hand into mine like a white nestling dove. How delicate were her fingers! Their taper ends were as soft as an infant's. I could not have been surprised if I had heard that she used them to see with.

I led her into my recitation-room, now, at seven in the evening, left a wide desert of benches by that throng of children who had all day been devouring black-board geography by the continent, and made nothing of taking in a whole ocean at one draught. I lighted the gas, and with one sweep of the sheep-skin pad swept from the board those three hundred miles of the Rocky Mountains which had been left over from the last course of my little Leviathan's late repast. In its place I drew a staircase of seven steps, on as large a scale as the space would permit. The first and the second I made of equal heights, the third only half as high as these, then three more of the same altitude with the first two, and finally one of the half-height again. While Margaret was looking at this figure with an expression of puzzled interest, I took from my desk, where it had been lying all day, so that I could glance at it paternally between classes, a smooth deal board, three feet long by two broad. Across this I had stretched seven guitar-strings, all of the high *E* quality, and of equal length, attached at one end by a permanent ledge, as in the instrument to which they belonged, and at the other by two wooden screws of my own manufacture. At present these strings lay lax along the board.

"Now, Margaret," said I, "take your eyes from the black-board for a moment, and look at this thing which I have in my hand. It is the simplest instrument of music which we know. It is so simple, because it is most like the human soul, which has to understand it. *How* it is like, we must go back to your definition of music to perceive. When you have that strange sense of a presence near you, which you call 'God close by,' do you ever feel any *growth*, any *increase*, in the nearness?"

"Almost always."

I waved my hands up and down, then let them drop wearily, and made the sign for laxity.

"Does the Presence ever come to you when you feel *thus?*"

"It does, indeed! Oftenest *then;* when I least look for it, and most need it. *That* is the reason I think it is the *dear God!*"

I drew an extra guitar-string from my pocket, and gently stretched it with my hands.

"And as the Presence draws near, does your heart feel more like *this?*"

She understood me, but was by this time watching my hands so eagerly that she said *yes* only by an inclination of the head. I stretched the string still tighter.

"And as it draws still nearer is this feeling still greater?"

"Yes!"

I stretched it tighter yet—"And *still* greater?"

"Yes."

I was adding force to my pull, when she caught my hands in hers, and with a wild impetuousness that I had never seen in her before, aided me at the extremity of her strength. The string snapped asunder, and, trembling like one seized with a divine afflatus, she exclaimed by a quick cry of her speaking hands,

"There! like *that* nearly!"

I renewed the lesson.

"The way in which men have agreed to represent the soul, and that growing strain it feels as the presence draws nearer and nearer, is by an instrument like this." I touched the lower string of the seven, and continued: "This is loose, now, as the soul is, before the presence comes. I will tighten it a little to express the first sense of the approach."

With a tuning-fork I got *C natural* of the vocal pitch, and began tightening the first string up to it.

"That is right," said I; "Watch my hand closely. You see how many turns I give this screw? One—two—three—there! nearly three and a half. Let this degree of tension represent the feeling of the first throb of the presence. Now, to represent the sense of the second, I tighten the next string a little more. Nearly half a turn tighter yet—you see?"

And so I continued up the whole septenary system—avoiding, for the present, so as not to embarrass her mind with too much, any exposition of the only half-interval between the third and fourth, the seventh and eighth steps of pitch.

Besides, I felt enough faith in her ideal music to believe, chimerical as it might seem, that she would unerringly translate the half-tension of this minor interval into the internal impulse which quantitively corresponded to it, at the proper time. And who can *explain* it, further than to reduce it to mathematical formulas themselves still more inexplicable?

The instrument being perfectly tuned in the natural gamut, I put it into her hands.

"Now shut your eyes, Margaret," said I, "and pull the first and second strings gently with your fore-finger. Try to banish everything outside of you but the strings, and see if you can perceive any difference in their tension."

"May I think of *God?* You know I believe *He* is the Presence."

"So do I. By all means, if it helps you."

"It does *help* me, very much."

"Very well, then."

She closed her eyes, and with her right hand struck the strings in succession. Her left was extended—oh, so gracefully!—as if she were listening with those delicate, beseeching fingers.

One, two—one, two—and she still sat motionless, giving me no report of any perception.

Presently she opened her eyes again, and looked at me for a moment with half-timid earnestness; then laid the instrument in her lap, while she signed to me—

"Must I banish *everything* but the strings?"

"And the Presence, you know, we agreed."

"Must I banish——*you, too?*

As I looked at her, thinking with a strange conflict of emotions for a right reply, her eyes fell for an instant, and then resumed their pure, fearless gaze of inquiry.

"Do I help you too, Margaret?"

"Yes, you are *very* good to me."

"Then think of *me,* dear child."

She closed her eyes again. It was the first time any one had ever begged that leave since my mother died, long be-

fore the terrible five years, saying she would always think of me, even in heaven.

The silence of that wide, blank recitation-room had been broken by the frail, soft repetitions that came from Margaret's fingers scarcely three minutes, when her eyes opened again, a quick gleam of delight bathed her whole face, and her rapid hands exclaimed—

"I feel it! I feel it! I understand what you mean."

I was like one intoxicated in my joy. I have heard people say that at such times they could "*dance*." As for *me*, sitting perfectly still, and looking straight into that illumined face, was my only adequate expression of myself. I had reached the first possibility, which was the mother of all the rest—Margaret *could* hear with her fingers.

"Thank God!" said I, at length; "you will certainly learn music now, if we live. To-night we have been glad enough, and learned all that is good for either of us without having time to think of it. Let us put by this instrument till to-morrow. And now—why, it is half-past ten o'clock!—go, and sleep sweetly, and may the Presence be gently near you!"

"Do you wish to lock this up in your desk?"

"Why?"

"Did *you* make it for me?"

"Yes, Margaret."

"Do you think I would be tempted to play on it? Are you afraid it would keep me awake if I should take it with me, and put it behind my pillow?"

"No, not if you promise not to play on it."

"I *will* promise. And no one shall see it."

So, clasping the board to her side with one hand, she put the other into my own, and went, holding it there like a child, to the foot of the broad staircase, where we must separate.

IV.

Within a fortnight from her first lesson, Margaret had mastered the whole gamut of *C natural*. I could blindfold her, place her finger upon any one of the strings, and get

back an unerring response as to its position in the scale. To my great encouragement her enthusiasm for this exercise continued unabated. She seemed to find all the pleasure of a hearing ear in the practice of her finger-education.

To relieve the monotony of this practice—for I could not see any possibility of its being otherwise than monotonous, remembering my own first lessons on the scale—I composed, now and then, some simple recreation for her by a numerical system of notation. She soon learned to recognize the little melodies I set for her, and was as delighted as a child when she discovered that the air she had been playing as "1, 2, 3," was really the great national hymn "Yankee Doodle."

But I felt the necessity of writing on these recreations, as over the benches on London bridge, "To *rest*, not to *lounge* on."

By the diagram of the staircase which I drew, you remember, during Margaret's first lesson, but did not then have time to use, I conveyed to her mind, little by little, the ideas of transposition. It is the most difficult thing in the world to explain even the mere external method by which she learned them—*my* part of the work, I mean—without a diagram like that on the black-board. Even then, some scientific musicians might so far discredit the possibility of teaching their science by such a method, that they would not care to understand me. But as nearly as words can explain it, this was the system I used. Recollect that I had taught Margaret the letters representing the notes of *C* scale, and had shown her the strings of our simple gamut instrument which corresponded to them. Also, that I had drawn for her a flight of steps, marking each step with a letter in the order of the scale, making *F* a low step, because it was only half the usual rate of ascent from *E*, and *C* a step equally low, because it bore the same relation of ascent from *B*. I now wiped out the original *F* which I had drawn and replaced it with another twice the former size. At the same time I sharped the *F* string of our gamut instrument, and without altering any of the others, put it back into Margaret's hands. This was my moment of suspense; yes, it may seem strange

to an uninterested person that I use this word, *agony!* For I reasoned thus: If all my past convictions have been delusive, then she will not notice this change except as a mere meaningless vagary, and will find just as much pleasure in thrumming the strings in their new relation of tension as before. But if she really has grasped the ideal principle of musical successions; if they have been recognized by her mind not only as a pleasure, but a *law*, then this disproportion which now exists will give her pain, and she will at least ask me what I have done.

A look of puzzle came over her face. First she glanced at the black-board, and then she felt of the strings. She lifted them one by one with the delicatest touch of her finger, as if she were weighing them, and she always paused longest at the sharped *F*. At last she searched my face keenly, with an expression of query, and then shook her head.

"What is the matter, Margaret?" said I.

She touched the *F* of the instrument, and pointed to its corresponding step on the board, then signed this answer:

"I do not know why, but I have learned to *need rest* at this step. The soul seems always to tire for a moment, and lifts its feet only half as high as before. There are too many high steps together, now."

My heart beat like a hammer! Would she, could she, find of herself what she must do?

"What will you do to help it, Margaret?" said I.

She thought, and looked, and fingered for several minutes more. Then she rose, took the chalk from my hand, and going to the board, altered all the other steps of the staircase to correspond with the raised *F*. Without my suggestion, she had transposed the scale!

I took the instrument into my hands and tuned it to the transposed key. I thought she might have done it, was sure she could, indeed, but I could not bear to mar the strange delight of my new triumph by any further suspense. Then I handed it back to her, she ran over the strings, and in an instant her whole face beamed with joy at the dis-

covery of the restored proportion. I knew such gladness in that hour as all imaginable riches could not buy from me.

Day after day I taught, and she studied patiently. In two months from the time of our first lesson in transposition she had learned all the keys and acquired the ideal philosophy of their meaning. At length I ventured to put a guitar into her hands. The artificial arrangement of its strings baffled her long, but before the summer vacation of the institution had arrived, she had mastered the relations which existed between our simple gamut instrument and this more complicated one.

As yet neither of us had imparted our secret studies to another soul beside ourselves. I knew Major Braithwaite was coming to see her graduated, and I wished to reserve the great surprise of her accomplishment for him.

Commencement-day had come. With it came all the friends of pupils who had friends. And among the first persons whom I saw in the morning as I came down the broad staircase to breakfast was Major Braithwaite. He was just entering the front door. Margaret happened to be in the entry at the time. The moment she saw him she ran into his arms, and he clasped her to him. Passionately? A heart-sickening doubt came over me. I had supposed he was a kind of adopted father to her. I had never heard of his being, thinking of being, anything else. Yet a father does not kiss in the way *he* kissed. There is not that strange light in a father's eyes when he sees his daughter.

Major Braithwaite was the perfection of soldierly beauty. His beard, which he wore full, was a luxuriant, curly black, like his hair, only, as the hair was not, slightly touched here and there with iron gray. His features were massive and Roman, without being heavy; his figure tall, erect, but not inflexible, and he seemed about thirty-six years old.

I was introduced to him at breakfast, and he thanked me for the interest I had taken in his ward. He meant the books I had explained to her—the conversation I had enjoyed with her in Dr. Gaskell's parlor, of which that kind man had told him. But the greatest of all interests—did

he know *that*, and would he have thanked me if he had known it?

Before the exercises of the day commenced, Dr. Gaskell called me into his study.

"I have good news for you," said he. "You are so trusted by all of us that I know I am not betraying confidence in telling it to you. Margaret is going to be married! Now, who do you think is the gentleman?—guess!"

"I am sure I can't think," replied I, in a dream.

"*Major Braithwaite!* He has always loved her since she was a little child. He believed that there was nothing she could not be taught to do. He has all the admiration of her that you or I would feel for Elizabeth Barrett Browning. And so he sent her here to be developed. This morning he asked me if she was sufficiently the woman to know her own mind—if I thought she could love anybody consciously, and answer for herself intelligently. I told him yes—decidedly. You see he has all the gentlemanly and soldierly horror of taking the weak at a disadvantage. When I said yes, he acted like a boy; he was perfectly overcome. He means to tell her that he loves her to-morrow. Of course she will accept him. Then she will be married during the vacation, and have a happy home as long as she lives. He is rich, and if she wishes it, he will resign his commission. So," concluded the doctor, rubbing his hands with pleasure, "her fortune is made for life. Dear girl! I am so glad! I think you will be asked to be the groomsman."

"That is capital!" said I, coolly—still in my dream; and so we parted to get ready for the exercises.

In these Margaret acquitted herself well—admirably. She shone like a queen among all the deaf-mutes who read or recited. At every new eloquent answer to the questions of the examiner which she wrote on the black-board, I glanced furtively at the Major, and saw proud sparkles in his eye which set my own heart on fire.

When all was over, the graduates were invited into Dr. Gaskell's parlor. I was still in my dream, but I thought enough of the outer world and its results to bring in Marga-

ret's guitar unnoticed and set it in the corner by Mrs. Gaskell's piano. The hours of the evening went on, and still Major Braithwaite was chained to Margaret's side. He hung on her every gesture and lived in her looks. At ten o'clock all of the deaf-mute company, wearied with the day's labor, had departed, leaving Dr. and Mrs. Gaskell, Margaret, the Major, and myself alone together.

I signed to Margaret. She went to the corner and brought out her guitar. The rest looked at her with puzzled curiosity.

"Major Braithwaite," said I, calmly, when she had taken her seat again, with the instrument in her lap, "I have kept the best wine until now. I wish to crown this last day of Miss Somers at the institution with the highest attainment she has made. Listen, if you please, and hear what she will do for you."

Again I signed to Margaret, and her fingers ran nervously over the strings. I looked at her steadily, and tried to throw into that look all the cheerfulness I could imagine. Then she seemed to take heart, and began that simple, rich melody from the Bohemian Girl, "When other lips and other hearts their tales of love shall tell."

Then came the turn of the others to dream! Dr. and Mrs. Gaskell sat silently in a trance where astonishment had not yet yielded to delight. Major Braithwaite, sitting straight upright in his chair after the soldierly manner, was pale as death, listening with compressed lips and breath that was imperceptible, save now and then in strong-burdened inflations.

From the first air Margaret's fingers wandered on to the second I had taught her. This was the Rataplan, from the Child of the Regiment. I had given her that in the old times, that, looked at through my dream, seemed a hundred years ago, because I thought it would please Major Braithwaite.

When she had finished playing, Mrs. Gaskell turned to me.

"*Does* she hear after all?" said she.

Major Braithwaite answered for me.

"No, she does not. She never knew I had entered this morning till I touched her. Her back was turned when I came in, and, forgetting her affliction, called her name. *Who* taught her to play?"

"Major Braithwaite asks who taught you to play, Margaret," said I.

She replied by laying down her guitar, stealing up to my side like a child, and taking my hand. The look she gave me then was at once joy and agony enough for years! Major Braithwaite saw it and grew paler still.

"Does she know any meaning in what she plays?" said he, eagerly; "does she play like an automaton? or can it be possible that in any way she understands it as music?"

As he spoke he signed the same questions to her, and she answered them:

"I *feel* God near me in that music—God and *kindness*—God and *him*." She pointed to me as she signed.

"Wonderful! wonderful!" was all that Dr. Gaskell and his wife could say.

But Major Braithwaite rose and stood between Margaret and me.

"What made you think of teaching her this thing?" said he. "I do not ask you *how*, for I could not understand that just now if you should tell me; but *why*—what was your motive?"

It then broke forth from me for the first time, because, even in his presence, I could not hold it longer:

"Because I *loved* her!"

"And does *she* love you?"

"Ask her."

So he asked her, and she returned me such an ineffable look that now, remembering it, I seem to be among the angels.

Major Braithwaite folded his arm around her, and kissed her on the forehead—not as in the morning, when he had kissed her on the mouth.

"My dear, dear *daughter!*" said he, "I believe you have chosen well. Would you be willing to go everywhere over the world and be this young man's wife? Supposing he had to be a soldier, like—many men, for instance; had to fight the Indians; be separated from you through nights and days when you would be very anxious about him; suppose you had to endure hardships for him—loneliness, doubt, fear, everything bitter and dreadful—would you be his wife still—his true, loving wife?"

Margaret's only answer to his signs was to cling still closer to me, and hide her face against my shoulder.

"Very well," spoke the Major. "Have you the salary which will enable you to support a wife, young man?"

Dr. Gaskell answered for me that my salary would be raised to twelve hundred the next term.

"That is enough," said Major Braithwaite. "A woman who loves a man can live on much less than one who does not. Margaret is now graduated. She can be married at any time. I would like to have it take place somewhere where I can be present. Can you come out to Fort Allen and be married, sir?"

"We can go anywhere to have you in our happiness, dear father," said Margaret.

"Very well," said the Major, calmly; "let it be in August, then."

VI.

After Margaret and I were married, we continued to live at the institution for a year. Then my mother's brother—an eccentric, though not an unusually rich man—who believed that young people should help themselves, awoke to the consciousness that I was doing that thing tolerably well, and had a wife to carry honorably through the world besides. So one day he offered to take me into partnership with him in his flourishing New York jobbing house, and for Margaret's sake I accepted the offer.

When we got into New York I found my means ampler, and the first thought I had was to complete my wife's *musical* education.

Again there arose in my mind those old analogies between sight and hearing. I had taught her something about music by the relation between sound and touch. There were still greater harvests of delight to be reaped by that wonderful mind of hers in the domain of *color* as representative of music.

We had a house in West Twenty-sixth street. For the first time in my life I knew what it was to have all the *gas* I wanted, and to pay the company a correspondingly large bill for the same. For my wife's New Year's present during the second year of my marriage I prepared a surprise based upon the following principles:

In Natural Philosophy we are taught that the primal colors, as ascertained from the phenomenon of the rainbow, are: "Violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange, red." But the question arises, is the rainbow a *gamut*, or a harmony? I decided that it was the latter. For its intention is the expression of *hope* to man. A mere scientific gamut would not have done *that*. The rainbow must be an expression in color of certain *gratifying* sentiments in the divine mind. Those sentiments, in heaven at least, must be reducible to speech. Therefore to music also. Let us try them on earth!

I came to the conclusion that the rainbow was not the true gamut of colors correspondent to the ascertained gamut of sounds. It must be divided and rearranged before the gamut can be made. And this was the rearrangement which, after long thinking, I arrived at: yellow, violet, blue, indigo, green, orange, red.

This, you see, at least in theory, was an order measurably consistent with the gamut of sounds. Between blue and indigo there is apparent but half the interval of color which intervenes between yellow and violet. Orange and red are separated from each other by but half the distance which divides indigo and green. Thus I constructed a gamut of colors which should to my mind represent that of sounds. I arranged in my study a long gas-pipe, connecting laterally with burners, whose several ground-glass shades were colored in order according to my theory. I then constructed

an apparatus with strings like the original one by which I had taught my wife, so that at the least pressure upon the strings the delicate cone of burning gas, which I had already lighted within these colored shades, should flare up into a broad tinted brilliancy. If, for instance, I moved the *F* string, it not only gave me the sense of its peculiar tension, but an indigo light on the wall before me also. Likewise, a touch on the *A* string gave me orange light; on the *D* string violet, and so on. Between each of these shades was one of combined tints representing the half intervals.

On New Year's day, for the first time in a month, I opened to my wife the door of my study.

"Come in, darling," signed I; "I have a new instrument for you. I want you to play on it for me. See if it gives you any greater pleasure than the guitar."

Margaret sat down in front of the strings and began playing the air, "True love can ne'er forget," while she watched the coming and going of the colored lights. A new delight seemed to seize her. She tried all the strings at once with capricious fingers, and shuddered as she saw a certain discrepancy in their relation. She pulled two neighboring strings at once, and the effect of their light combination on her was that of a musical discord. Then, finally, she returned to the true melody, and found such a new pleasure in the relation between tension and colors—in what we call music—as I never saw in the most rapt of hearing performers before.

After this first experiment she grew rapidly in her knowledge of inaudible music. She made many suggestions by which I immediately profited—as to the colors of the lamps. With a box of paints, she drew me the exact shades which, to her mind, represented a certain tension of string, and I had it immediately copied in glass to replace in the apparatus.

From melodies she gradually rose to harmonies. She learned to combine two tints and tensions so as to give her the idea of *chords*. And when she had accomplished this attainment, I knew that her musical attainment was at its

earthly apex. She might learn the most difficult pieces of Chopin—and find pleasure in them—but she never could attain further *primal ideas of music* till she reached that great resounding dome of Heaven, where the angels play and God is satisfied!

VII.

"Dr. Athanasius Bloor cures all diseases of the eye and ear. His operations are painless, his success absolute, and he is recommended by the following gentlemen, whose selves or families have been benefited by his treatment:

"Timothy Tompkins, Esq., Common Councilman of Peoria; strabismus.

"Rev. Hezekiah Green, Jenkinstown, Conn.; permanent deafness.

"Hon. Peter Plumpie, Sec. For. Miss. Soc.; blindness and deafness, entire."

I saw this advertisement in one of the New York papers eighteen months after I was married. I debated for a while whether Dr. Athanasius Bloor was not a quack. Finally I determined to take my wife to him. He could not hurt her at any rate, and he might make her hear, which would be the crowning delight of my life.

So I took my wife to Dr. Athanasius Bloor's.

I found that he was *not* a mere quack; that he had really done, and was capable of doing, far more good than the newspapers gave him credit for. I put my wife under his treatment. He discovered that her loss of hearing was to be ascribed to no congenital and irremediable cause, but to a pressure on the auditory nerve which rendered it obtuse. This pressure, he thought, might be either a sluggish cerebral tumor, or a closing of the outer passages through the results of early disease.

Whatever it might be, he had remedied it in two months from our first interview with him. Margaret heard some sounds. She knew when they were firing salutes from Governor's Island, or ringing the bells for fire in our district, for instance, and in six weeks more she heard my voice! Oh, blessed time! It seemed as if Heaven had been brought down to earth again. The voice that spoke to her sweetest! And she distinguished it from the hard noises of the world!

Well, for one short month I was a happy man. He who has been happy for a whole month, if he remembers it, may be happy forever. So, at least, must I fancy, to live—to *bear* life at all now.

My beautiful one began fading. Day by day I saw it without believing it. And when I asked her why she was so wan and pale—why she trembled so as to wake me through the long nights—she answered in her old beloved signs, which she clung to still—

"It *jars* me so! There is too much *noise* in the world. I do not hear enough *music*."

At last I became sorry that she heard. I even prayed God that He would make her deaf again. She had expected too much of the world. There was more noise than music there.

But I had made her *hear*. I must accept *that*. I had thought it a blessing. If it was not a blessing, whose fault was it?

I was compelled to confess my wife's situation very critical. Her peril stared me in the face. If some means could not be found of protecting her sensitive soul from the shocks of the outer world's discordant sounds, she would certainly die, and that very speedily. I could think of no other comparison for her than a spirit walking through the din and the roughnesses of life, in perfect nakedness, but with all the bodily senses strangely preserved to it; feeling the cold with an intensity of pain which bodies never knew; hearing the outcries, the curses, the wailings of men and women with an infinitely sensitive ear; seeing all the cruelest wretchedness of humanity with a piercing eye that could not close, without shelter, without sleep. I began to understand that God had meant Margaret's deafness as a great mercy—that it was the necessary cover to the most delicate of human souls, in order that she might really hear no more of the world than could be taken in through sight, touch, taste, and smell.

I could not restore her deafness, but I environed her with all that was loveliest in earthly voices. I made this care of

her my only luxury. I sacrificed everything which men usually call desirable to the one aim of enshrining her in a sacredness of sweet sound. I bought the choicest music-boxes, and kept them playing by her bedside when she lay down to sleep. I took her to every performance given by the best artists in opera or concert-room. Oh! with what joy did I thank God when I found that there were some musicians whose music was not too harsh to give her pleasure! How I exulted when that grand dear Formes brought tears of happiness to her eyes in Bertramo; when D'Angri's wonderful honey of song distilled through her ears into her heart, and made her clasp my hand with a glad thrill in Zerlina!

But from all the great singers and instrument-players she ever came home to seek a better bliss in the music of that apparatus I had given her on New Year's day. That expressed to her mind a music such as she would never hear till she reached heaven. And while she tenderly touched the strings, weighing their tension as of old, and watched the gleaming colors dance hither and thither on the wall, the bitterness within me welled to the eyes, for I knew that she was getting ready to hear that music of eternal life in which there are no false tones.

We had been married two years, when, one night, I took her to hear Formes for the third time in Roberto. That night the greatest of living singers and actors eclipsed himself. Having the greatest opera that was ever written to be great in, he was great enough for it. He was the Bertramo whom Meyerbeer *meant*. Never again in this world do I expect to see Robert the Devil. The thought of hearing any other man than Formes sing the tremendous music of that last act is a pain to me. My memory of the opera now is such that to find it misrendered in a single point would be like breaking down the everlasting distinction between right and wrong. Roberto is an opera whose plot has no parallel for sublimity in the grandest involvements of Greek tragic writing. Æschylus never had such a plot. And there is not one particular in which the music of Meyerbeer could

be ameliorated for the plot's expression. Nor is there a man living who understands that plot—that music—and can sing it, save Carl Formes. So now we went to hear him for the third—yes, though I did not know it then, for the last time.

Formes, I have said, surpassed himself. The cumulative horrors of the fiendish father were borne up on his demi-god shoulders as Atlas bears the world. My wife never took her eyes from the stage when he stood there. In the last act she clasped my hand and turned so pale that I half rose from my seat with fright. I thought the long-feared end was coming. But seeing my suffering she composed herself, and managed to endure the finale.

The moment that we got home she went to the instrument in my study, which, out of burlesque acquiescence with the Grecizing nomenclature of the times, we had called the *Kaleidophone.* I lighted the colored lamps, and I took my seat beside her. She began wandering over the strings into a memory of Roberto. First she repeated the "Vanne, Vanne," that exquisite air in which Alice brings to Robert the message of their dying mother. Thence she strayed to the Gaming Chorus. Finally she lost herself in the grand mazes of Bertramo's character, and from that moment restricted herself to expressing him alone.

It will seem incredible, I know, how, by an instrument like this, where only melody was possible in perfection, and that the slender melody of a single gamut of strings, the music of Roberto could be at all conveyed. And, truly, any but Margaret or I might have found it meagre enough for the purpose. But we knew its hidden meanings. She had translated its tension and its colors into the music of the soul. And I, though less favored than she, because I had not like her any enclosed and purely spiritual sense, from the long efforts I had made to awaken this sense in her, had at length reached some measurable perception of her interior music.

That night to me she seemed inspired. The rich hues of the lamps danced on the wall as if they were alive. The lamp which she played most was the red one. She told

me that this color was the best to express Bertramo's character where it touched humanity, but our apparatus was sadly deficient in shades of the tint. It needed at least a hundred lamps to give the representation of Bertramo's music in this particular alone. I promised her to complete the instrument according to any suggestions she might make. Alas! I have never done so. There, on my lonely wall, it stands imperfect still.

But when the fiendish side of Bertramo showed itself the colors she most used were a succession of violet and orange. As she touched the strings communicating with those lamps the room was full of lurid light, and I saw the caverns opening to receive the demon home. We forgot the simple music of the strings. We revelled in a gorgeous coming and going of rich lights, which spoke Meyerbeer's meaning as no sound can ever speak. And when at last she came to the passage where Alice triumphs and Robert is saved, the green lamp sent a mellow lustre of hope and peace through my study, in which, as on a ladder of Heaven, our lifted minds seemed to see angels passing up and down.

When this last strain of color died away, Margaret said to me: "I am very tired, dear. Let us sleep."

I took her in my arms as was my wont, and carried her like a sick child up to our chamber. I helped her undress for the night, and lay down beside her. She slept almost immediately, and as soon as I heard her beloved heart beating and her breath coming regularly, I slept also.

It was about three o'clock in the morning when her voice awakened me.

"Husband," said she, "don't be frightened—but I feel very strangely. Take my hand, please. I love to feel you by me. For I am so happy, and I hear such wonderful music that I am afraid to be alone!"

"Oh, Margaret," I answered, my own heart almost stopping with a mystical, undefined fear, "it is nothing but the effect of last night's music on your overwrought nerves. Try, darling, if you cannot sleep again. I will stroke your

forehead and lull you, as I have so often done before. Go to sleep, beautiful one! precious one!"

And she answered me:

"I feel too wide awake. I do not think I shall ever sleep again."

I watched by her side in the loneliness for an hour. Her breath grew softer and slower. I made an effort to arouse myself, to call the servants, and send for a doctor. But she clasped my hand so tightly that I feared to loose it, lest I should loose life with it. I must have been paralyzed.

At the end of the hour she spoke to me once more.

"I hear again," said she, "as I used to in the old times at the institution. The Presence is coming nearer—and nearer." Then she added faintly—"*And is close beside me. I hear again.*"

And she *did* hear. For she was among the music of the angels!

THE ÆSTHETIC ELEMENT IN PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

BY EGBERT L. BANGS, M. A., FLINT, MICHIGAN.

ELEGANT buildings consecrated to public uses have always been considered an honor to the people erecting them. At some time the task of providing such structures is sure to devolve upon every State. With many of our younger States the proper style of buildings for State institutions of various kinds is a practical question of the day. It is one which comes before legislative bodies, and it is one in which the people of the State are deeply interested.

Asylums for the insane and for idiots and imbeciles, and institutions for the deaf and dumb and for the blind, are now fully recognized as legitimate objects of State care.

Certain to be needed in every State, and equally certain to be provided where they are not already erected, they should be enduring monuments of a broad philanthropy, and no parsimonious views should be allowed to control legislative action in their behalf. There is a temptation on the part of legislators to make political capital by rocking to and

fro upon the hobby of economy, and, for the sake of popularity with tax-loathing constituents, to postpone the completion of such institutions or to build them in a manner that the next generation will be ashamed of. There is a temptation also on the part of the people who pay the taxes to reason in this way: *we* cannot afford to live in fine houses; therefore away with all this nonsense about architectural effects and æsthetics and elegant ornamentation for the benefit of classes who must be cared for at the expense of the State.

What I have to say upon this subject I say with special reference to institutions for the deaf and dumb and for the blind, and I speak particularly of these because directly interested in them. They are simply schools for exceptional classes of persons, and in this State at least they are simply a part of the educational system of the State. My only purpose in this article is to put in a plea for giving due prominence to the æsthetic element in the branch of architecture to which buildings for the classes just referred to belong.

Let us clearly understand not only what the State by common acceptation undertakes to do when she erects buildings for her unfortunates, but let us also consider what she ought to undertake. She does undertake beyond all question to give her defective classes as perfect an education as they are capable of receiving. We claim that for the benefit of such classes the State should use diligently every means of culture at her command. She should approach the minds of such through every avenue that is open. And what avenue but that of sight is or can be open to the deaf-mute? His keen eye is quick to observe whatever is beautiful, and the finer feelings of his nature can be greatly affected by the daily contemplation of architectural beauty. As a means of culture, then, I believe that it is right to spend money enough to make public buildings for such purposes models of elegance and good taste.

I have spoken of the immediate object in view in the erection of State institutions. There is also a remote object

which never should be lost sight of. A State, when she erects a public building, has a golden opportunity for giving character and direction to the public taste.

Visitors from all parts of the country are constantly thronging to all our State institutions, and multitudes of persons every year can gain new conceptions of beauty in architecture if they are allowed to see a finished specimen of it. The ideas they thus get remain with them, and little by little a higher ideal of architecture will pervade the community.

The building that a State erects in the interest of any cause is the highest possible expression of her opinion of that cause. If the building be mean and insignificant, the cause represented by it will be degraded. Elegance in the edifice gives a higher character to the work that is done in it.

I would not squander public money in gaudy display, but when a sovereign State puts before the world a building consecrated to education and benevolence, and has the money at her command, she owes it to herself to do something that men will not speak of with a sneer, as inferior to the work of private enterprise.

Pride is sometimes a virtue, and people will love best and cherish most tenderly what they are justly proud of. It is a noble spirit that calls for elegant buildings for public purposes. There is a time for all things, and in the history of every State there comes a time when æsthetic culture should receive attention. During the pioneer stage, attention must of necessity be directed chiefly to providing for the most pressing wants of society, without much regard for appearances. But in due season that stage is passed, and then it is in order to look for something higher.

I like the ideas of the old Greeks about public buildings. They studied, not only for perfection in the building itself, but they took largely into account its relations to surrounding nature. They made not only wood and stone, but hill and plain and grove and stream, pay tribute to the æsthetic element that entered so largely into their national

character. And they were wise in doing this, for the fires of patriotism burnt with a purer flame and with more fervent heat in a country that had untold treasures for her sons to be proud of. There is a narrow, mistaken practical spirit that would stop short of what is worthy and becoming for a State to accomplish. That spirit unchecked by a better public sentiment would eliminate from our public buildings as much as possible of the æsthetic element—an element that ought by all means to be cherished. Christian civilization and enlightened modern legislation ought not to go back to antiquity to be taught liberal ideas of what public buildings should be.

MISCELLANEOUS.

BY THE EDITOR.

The Proportion of Semi-Mutes.—Mr. Bélanger, principal of the Montreal Catholic Institution, writes us that he *did* understand the term *semi-mute* as explained in our circular of inquiry, and that he was correct in saying there were no semi-mutes in his institution. "Not a single one of the seventy-five pupils can hear in any other way than by vibration, and not a single one has learned to speak before becoming deaf." The method of instruction used in this institution is "the German method, helped by the language of signs."

The following note from Mr. Dudley shows that the proportion of semi-mutes in the Clarke Institution is much less than was indicated in the tabular statement published in the last number of the *Annals:*

To the Editor of the Annals:

SIR: In the absence of the principal, very erroneous returns were made to you through the misunderstanding of a subordinate teacher.

The whole number of pupils in 1871 was forty-four. Of these just eighteen came into the category which you intended to designate as *semi-mute.*

Of the eighteen, ten were semi-mute in the ordinary meaning of that expression, and eight had learned a few words, but not

how to put them into sentences, by the ear, before hearing was lost.

Yours, respectfully,

L. J. DUDLEY,
Chairman of the School Committee.

We may add that in our definition of the term *semi-mute*, as being applicable to the deaf who have acquired some knowledge of *language* through the ear, we did *not* mean to include those who have merely learned a few isolated words and have no power of putting them together into sentences.

The Co-education of the Deaf and Dumb and the Blind.—At the second convention of American instructors of the blind, held last August at Indianapolis, Indiana, a resolution, to the effect that it is not expedient to instruct the blind in the same institutions with deaf-mutes, was introduced, and referred to a committee of five, who reported unanimously in its favor, assigning the following reasons:

"1. Deaf-mutes and the blind differ from each other even more widely than either class differ from those having all their senses; these differences, constitutional or incidental, are such that they cannot be intimately associated without unpleasant results.

"2. The modes of instruction peculiar to each class are entirely unlike and incompatible.

"3. When both classes are instructed together, the mutes, being usually more numerous than the blind, are likely to engross a still larger proportionate share of the attention of the officers.

"4. The experience of institutions for both classes shows that, while the department for mutes prospers, and its inmates increase with the population, the growth of the blind department is almost invariably retarded."

The committee also expressed the opinion "that in new States, where the number of blind pupils is not sufficient to warrant the establishment of an institution, it is far better to provide for the instruction of these pupils in some neighboring institution till such time as the State has some twenty-five or thirty blind pupils, and has established an institution of its own."

The resolution was discussed at some length by several members of the convention, all speaking strongly in the affirmative, and was finally adopted without a dissenting voice. Mr. Wilkinson, of California, is the only teacher of either class, so far as we know, who has ever advocated the education of the deaf and dumb and the blind in the same institution; his reasons for favoring this plan, under certain conditions, have been given in recent reports of the California Institution.

Deaf-Mute Text-Books for Chinese Scholars.—The "Historical and Financial Statement of Forty Years' Work at the Yorkshire Institution for the Deaf and Dumb" mentions the fact that one of Dr. Baker's lesson-books has been translated into Chinese and printed at Hong-Kong. Dr. Legge, the translator, says in his preface to the book:

"All who have been engaged in teaching Chinese youth the English language, and the ordinary branches of an English education, have continually felt the want of school-books adapted for the peculiar sphere of their labors. The translation of Mr. Baker's lessons was undertaken to supply this want, the translator having found them better suited for the purpose than any others he had met with."

"The cause of this preference," adds Dr. Baker in the "Statement," "is very obvious to those who are practiced in the instruction of the deaf and dumb. In their early stages of learning our pupils possess but a limited acquaintance with language, and have no idea of inflexions, or of the various modifications of words. To avoid the necessity for these accessories, the lessons referred to by Dr. Legge were composed in short sentences, abounding in nouns, adjectives, and verbs, expressive of sensible ideas. The sign-language of the deaf and dumb, into which they translate written language, consists, like some of the Asiatic languages, of only radical signs for ideas, which admit neither of inflexion nor composition; thus the same expression is given by them for *joy, joyful, to rejoice*, exactly as in the Chinese language. The lessons, therefore, intended for such pupils, convey knowledge more rapidly by dispensing with the refined accessories of a copious and matured language, and are at the same time suitable for those peoples whose imperfect languages must keep them in the cradle of their species. The same observation is applicable to an ignorant population at home.

"A more advanced volume of the same series was selected and printed especially for the use of the boys in the government schools of India, under the sanction of the department of public instruction in the Punjab."

Pretended Restoration of Hearing.—Some of our readers may remember a "remarkable case" described in the *Annals* last year, (vol. xvi., page 52,) of a young man whose hearing was said to have been so far restored by a course of "psychological and medical treatment" that he could "hear the sounds of the human voice distinctly, and imitate them with a precision perfectly astonishing." There certainly seemed to be sufficient testimony to his recently-acquired ability to hear loud noises and utter some words and letters, and the woman who was treating the case promised perfect restoration of speech and hearing. But more than a year has passed since then and nothing further has come of it; not the least permanent benefit was conferred; the doctress is richer and the deaf-mute is poorer by the fee of fifteen dollars which he paid for the pretended cure.

The Manual Alphabet in the Hour of Death.—One of the benefits of a knowledge of the manual alphabet is the use which may be made of it by the dying to communicate with their friends, when the voice has lost its strength and the lips refuse to speak. We recall some precious utterances of this kind; the expression of last wishes, messages to loved ones, words of faith and peace and happy hope. The latest that has come to our notice is that of Grace Aguilar, whose "Days of Bruce," "Home Influence," and other writings, are so well known. In her final illness, after the power of speech was gone, she conversed with her friends in this manner, and her last words thus expressed were, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

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The American Annals of the Deaf and Dumb is a quarterly publication, appearing in the months of January, April, July, and October. Each number contains at least sixty-four pages of matter, principally original. The subscription price is one dollar and fifty cents a year, payable in advance. Communications relating to the *Annals* may be addressed to the Editor,

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